

## **Letter for existing Respiratory Service Users**

We are writing this to inform you that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic it has been decided to stop all non-urgent clinical work with the NHS to focus on only life or limb-saving treatments. This will enable us to tackle the challenges of this unprecedented situation. It is imperative that NHS resources are now diverted to looking after sick and vulnerable patients to help us treat and prevent the spread of this illness. This means that we have to defer many of your appointments and suspend the majority of our face to face clinic consultations. We will be offering you telephone or internet video call appointments instead. We will try to minimise the impact of clinic cancellations as far as we are able.

At this point in time, we are not sure when normal services will be resumed (we hope this will not be prolonged) and we shall be guided by the Department of Health and World Health Organisation. We aim to continue to support you – see our plan at the bottom of this letter.

### **Respiratory Nursing Team:**

Sarah Kearney and Sonya Lynch will continue to provide advice and support via either telephone or internet video calling. Home visits will be considered on a case by case basis. It is required that we contact you by telephone before we visit to check your symptoms so that we can protect you and respond safely.

Please do not adjust your oxygen concentrator or cylinder without discussing this first with one of the specialist nursing team.

Ian Brown will continue to provide input during admissions as far as possible and the respiratory nursing team will be working to support discharges from hospital to home.

### **Respiratory Physiology:**

#### **Lung Function:**

We are postponing all non-urgent tests. If you have been referred by your GP or other health professional, please know that we will honour the referral and will resume tests when are given the go-ahead. The types of test we offer may have to change according to the guidance from the relevant authorities.

If you believe your lung function test is urgent, please contact us to ensure we can decide with you how best to proceed.

You can call us on 552114.

### **CPAP:**

We will be offering either telephone or internet video calling for those individuals who need to have CPAP reviews.

If you have any issues with equipment you can call us on 552114.

### **Sleep Studies:**

We are postponing all non-urgent tests.

### **Respiratory Physiotherapy and Clinical Psychology:**

It will not be possible for Fiona Biles or Dr Anna Garrett to hold clinics face to face. In most cases it will be necessary to suspend the interventions you have been offered until we have the go-ahead from the Department of Health that the threat of Covid-19 is under control. You will not be discharged and will remain under the care of the Service until it is possible to resume intervention. If you feel that your forthcoming appointment is urgent you will be offered the option of a virtual appointment via either the telephone or internet video-calling.

### **Pulmonary Rehabilitation:**

In line with the guidance we have cancelled our existing and future pulmonary rehabilitation groups. If you have been referred by your GP or other health professional, please know that we will honour your referral and we will resume assessments and groups when the Department of Health give us the go-ahead.

### **Breathe Easy Groups:**

In line with the guidance all Breathe Easy groups are suspended. Andy Savage and the Breathe Easy crew are producing a Friday Supplement that contains news, advice, fun activities and of course a home Step challenge! To access this please contact Andy Savage on 01983 810932 / 07779 616189 Email: [ajsavage67@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ajsavage67@yahoo.co.uk).

### **Virtual Appointments:**

Please ensure we have up to date telephone and email information.

You will need a working telephone or mobile phone for telephone appointments.

### **Virtual appointments using Attend anywhere software:**

You will need a computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile phone with an internet browser that is either google chrome (android and Microsoft users) OR safari (Mac users) and a webcam for video-calling.

Webcams are often built into laptops, tablets and mobile phones. Your home wi-fi should be sufficient for video-calling unless you are aware of poor signal in your home. It can be helpful to plug your device into the router with an Ethernet cable to improve the quality of the call. It is possible to use a mobile phone for video calling – please note this will use your mobile data. You do not have to install any software to your device.

One of our team will contact you with the day and time of your virtual appointment.

**This is the link that you must type into your browser - <https://nhs.vc/iow/respiratory>**

This will take you to the respiratory clinic waiting area.

Your clinician at the appointed time will ask you to join the call. We will do our best to be on time for your virtual appointment and thank you for your patience.

### **Our plan to support you during these difficult times:**

Please do visit our Respiratory webpage via the IW NHS Trust website [https://www.iow.nhs.uk/our-services/acute-care-services/respiratory-and-sleep/new\\_page\\_2.htm](https://www.iow.nhs.uk/our-services/acute-care-services/respiratory-and-sleep/new_page_2.htm)

Or email us at [iownt.Pulmonary.Rehab@nhs.net](mailto:iownt.Pulmonary.Rehab@nhs.net)

We will be providing links to helpful electronic resources to help you self-care. It is hoped that Dr Anna Garrett and other members of the Team will be able to upload some blogs and guided practices according to their availability.

If you would like to request a paper self-care pack, please contact us on 01983 552331.

A member of our administrative team will be available during usual working hours 9.00-4.00pm Monday to Friday. Due to the high volume of calls we expect to receive, please be patient and do leave us an answer phone message clearly stating your name, telephone number and reason for calling.

**Important Note**

It is possible that any and all of our team may be redeployed in other clinical areas and will not be available in the usual way. We will try our best to monitor the phone and emails.

Thank you very much for your patience and understanding

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Kearney  
Lead respiratory Nurse Specialist  
On behalf of the Respiratory Service Team