

# Getting help from your continence service



## What is Continence?

Continence is when you have full control of your bladder and bowel.

The first step should always be to get a professional assessment and help. You may have been suffering in silence for some time, coping with leakage from your bladder or bowel. Whatever the problem, we want to assure you that our aim is to assess the cause and offer you a treatment programme to help. In some instances individuals may need to wear protective pads and this is something we can offer guidance on.

Not everyone who attends the Continence clinic will have problems with incontinence. Some people come to our clinic as they may have weakness in the pelvic floor muscles or they are unable to manage their bladder or bowel effectively. This can, if left unattended, lead to problems in later years.

## How can the service help me?

Bladder and bowel problems are very common. People are often too embarrassed to seek help but bladder and bowel problems can be assessed and treated. For most people, bladder or bowel problems are curable once the cause has been established. This can improve your quality of life and make sure you can carry on with your everyday activities.

## How long will the appointment take?

Your first appointment will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Follow up appointments will generally take 15 to 30 minutes. These appointments can take place in clinic, by telephone or Video Consultation

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## **Who will I see?**

You will be seen by one of our Continence Nurse Specialists or our Pelvic Health Physiotherapist who assess and treat a variety of bladder, bowel or pelvic health conditions. These may include.

- Urinary incontinence
- Urgency
- Frequency
- Overactive bladder (OAB) syndrome
- Recurrent urine infections
- Prolapse
- Pelvic floor muscle weakness
- Over activity of pelvic floor muscles
- Pain related pelvic floor dysfunction
- Constipation
- Chronic Faecal Urgency
- Faecal incontinence

## **What do we do?**

The Continence Nurse Specialist or Physiotherapist will carry out a careful assessment to build up a picture of why you have a problem and what can be done to help. During the appointment the Nurse or physio will ask you about any continence problems. You do not need to bring a urine specimen with you but you may be asked for one during your appointment. Sometimes the nurse or physio may wish to examine you but this will only be done with your agreement. If you prefer not to be examined please let the nurse know when she assesses you. Finally we will discuss with you the options for treatment.

It has been shown that treating the above conditions conservatively can be very effective. We will perform a thorough assessment to establish the causes of your problems. We will assess your pelvic floor muscles to see if you need to strengthen them or change the way you exercise, if you have not been shown how to do this properly you may well be doing it wrong.

## **Treatment Plans:**

There are various types of treatments available including pelvic floor and core stability exercises, bladder and bowel retraining, biofeedback, muscle stimulation, manual therapy and acupuncture. We can give you advice on your problem and tailor a treatment program to meet your needs.

### **Continence Service Clinics:**

- General Continence Assessment Clinic
- Pelvic Health Physiotherapy Clinic
- Uroflowmetry
- Removal of indwelling catheter
- Continence and Urology one stop female clinic
- Post Radical Prostatectomy
- Biofeedback
- Neuro-muscular Electrical Stimulation

**The continence service will ensure your privacy and dignity is maintained at all times.**

### **Safeguarding**

Wiltshire Health and Care has a strong commitment to care that is safe, of a high quality and that upholds our patients' rights. All our patients have the right to live lives free from abuse or neglect and, where they are able, to make or be supported to make informed decisions and choices about their treatment, care and support. Where patients are not able to make their own decisions, Wiltshire Health and Care staff are committed to ensuring that treatment, care and support is undertaken in accordance with the person's best interests. In order to fulfil these commitments, Wiltshire Health and Care follow the Safeguarding principles and responsibilities laid out in Sections 42-46 of the Care Act (2014) and are informed by, and apply, the guiding principles and provisions of the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

If you or your carer have any concerns about abuse, neglect or your rights in relation to care provided by Wiltshire Health and Care or any other agency or individual, please raise this directly with any Wiltshire Health and Care staff or contact the Safeguarding Adults Team by telephone on: 0300 4560111.

### **Wiltshire Health and Care Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any questions, or concerns, suggestions or compliments about our service, please speak to a member of staff.

This information sheet is available in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 0300 1237797 and [PALS.wiltshirehealthandcare@nhs.net](mailto:PALS.wiltshirehealthandcare@nhs.net)