

Specialist Nurse Service

Heart Failure



The Community Heart Failure Service

The Community Heart Failure Team aims to provide treatment and support to patients registered with a Luton GP Surgery, who have a confirmed diagnosis of chronic heart failure.

This Service is delivered by a team of specialist nurses who have received special training in Heart Failure. They see patients in their own homes, or at clinic and help them manage and control symptoms aiming to reduce hospital admissions. The Service aims to promote independence and to encourage self care through patient education.

The Community Heart Failure Specialist Nurses work closely with GPs, Hospital Consultants and other Community Services to improve care and optimize treatment.

What is Heart Failure?

The heart is a powerful muscle that delivers oxygen and blood around the body in the form of a pumping action. The term 'Heart Failure' refers to the heart not functioning as well as it should; the muscle has become too weak or stiff to work properly.

Signs and Symptoms

Heart failure can cause a number of symptoms, these may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Leg swelling
- Exercise intolerance
- Tiredness
- Dizziness
- Weight gain

How to access the service

Referrals are made by your GP, Hospital or any other Health Care Professional. Patients previously known to the service may re-refer themselves. Once the referral is received by the service, and the patients fits the criteria then they are added to the waiting list. The patient will then be contacted by a member of the team and an appointment will be arranged. The first assessment may take between 1-2 hours, as a full history and examination may be carried out.

The service is available Monday to Friday, between 9am and 5pm (excluding bank holidays).

Getting the right medication

The Heart Failure Specialist Nurse Service also works with Pharmacy Technicians. The Pharmacy Technicians may, if requested, visit you to review the medicines you are taking, offer advise regarding any potential side effects, and answer any questions you may have. The Pharmacy Technician can work with you to make sure you understand your medications, and how and when to take them.

Quality of Service

In order to ensure we are continually improving the service that we are offering, questionnaires will be sent to you and to your family, so that you can tell us about your experience of the Community Heart Failure Specialist Nurse Service. Please return any such request to your Nurse.

Supporting Students

As a teaching organisation, we often provide practice placements for health care students. Students are integral to patient care and practice their skills, under supervision of Trust staff. If you would prefer them not to take part in your treatment provision, please inform your nurse. This will not affect the quality of care that you receive.

Discharge from the Service

Once your condition is stable and you are taking the best doses of medication for your heart failure, we will step you down from the service. Please note that you could be discharged from the service if you fail to attend appointments. We will ask you to contact the service in the future if you feel you want to be seen by us again.

For further information about this service contact:

Heart Failure Service

The Poynt, 2-3 Poynters Road, Luton, LU4 0LA

Tel: 0333 405 3126

Clinical setting:

Luton Treatment Centre, Vestry Close, Luton, LU1 1AR

If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any concerns about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on Freephone 0800 408 0199 or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.