

The Dudley Heart Failure Team

Community Heart Failure Patient Information Leaflet

Contact number: 01384 323158

Introduction

This booklet has been designed to provide you with information about the Dudley heart failure team and how we can help you to manage your condition. It also gives details of groups and organisations that you may find of use.

The heart failure team is designed to provide specialist nursing care to patients with acute and chronic heart failure, whilst working with other health and social care professionals to deliver care according to your individual needs.

Heart failure is a term used to describe a set of symptoms that occur when the heart fails to pump blood and nutrients around the body as efficiently as it should. Although this seems frightening, it is best to think of it as “my heart is not functioning as well as it should and needs treatment to support it, to improve its efficiency”.

Our nurses and healthcare assistants are specially trained to respond to the complexities of the condition. The aim is to ease heart failure symptoms, enhance and maintain quality of life using evidence-based treatments and to improve the end-of-life experience, respecting any final wishes.

About the heart failure service

The heart failure team incorporates specialist nurses and support workers working in the hospital setting and within the community, enabling a seamless delivery of care from admission through to discharge. The heart failure service also incorporates a virtual ward, where patients requiring early assessment post hospital discharge, or to prevent hospital admissions, are closely monitored and treated in their own homes.

Referrals into the heart failure team come from a variety of sources, such as via GP, post hospital discharge or through cardiology outpatient clinics.

Our promise to you

Excellent communication between the heart failure team, you and your family and carers are essential. We will:

- Listen to your feelings, fears, views, and beliefs.
- Give you the information you need about your condition, treatments and side effects in an honest, caring, and compassionate manner.
- Work in partnership with you, your family and carers concerning your care, encouraging self-management, and working together to achieve the best outcome.
- Aim to get you onto the best possible medication to maintain a stable heart function and improve the quality of your life.
- Liaise with members of the multidisciplinary healthcare team as appropriate and correspond with consultants, GPs and wider services, as required.

Where are the clinics held?

We offer heart failure specialist nurse-led clinics in several locations across the Dudley borough, including:

- Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre
- Halesowen Health and Social Care Centre
- Central Clinic, Hall Street, Dudley

You will be assessed in a 'new patient' clinic, which usually lasts for 45 to 60 minutes. You will then continue to be seen in a 'follow up' clinic, lasting for 30 minutes.

Once your heart failure symptoms have been treated and stabilised by the heart failure team, you will then be discharged back into your GPs care, to continue to manage your medications and monitoring of blood tests in a routine manner.

Home visits are offered to patients who are housebound or who are too unwell to attend a clinic appointment.

Regular telephone support and consultation is provided as required.

The heart failure service is available seven days per week, including Bank Holidays, between the hours of 8am - 4pm (6pm when facilitating early intervention via the virtual heart failure team).

What will happen at your consultation with the heart failure team?

- We will assess your existing knowledge about your condition, treatment, medication, exercise capabilities and diet and provide you with written information about your condition. You will be given support to enable you to manage your condition, including understanding the importance of symptoms monitoring; to be able to recognise when you need to contact us. Information can be given verbally and in written medical formats.

- The severity of your heart failure symptoms may vary from day to day. If your symptoms worsen, your condition will be more closely monitored and your medications may be adjusted to control these changes, to prevent the need for a hospital stay. If your wish is to stay at home, we will do everything possible to facilitate this.

Please bring your most up to date prescription or your actual medications with you to each clinic appointment.

During the consultation, your heart failure specialist nurse will carry out:

- A clinical examination - listening to your heart and lungs using their specialist skills and expertise.
- Recording and monitoring of weight - your weight will be recorded and monitored for changes. It would be of benefit to you to purchase a set of scales to enable close monitoring yourself. Your body mass index (BMI) will be recorded and monitored. Weight management may be discussed.
- Your legs and abdomen will be assessed for signs of water retention.
- Recording and monitoring of vital signs, including blood pressure, temperature, respiration rate, oxygen levels and pulse.
- Self-monitoring equipment may be loaned to you (if appropriate) after the initial consultation, including blood pressure and heart rate monitoring machines. This may then enable the virtual monitoring of symptoms and reduce the frequency of face to face appointments.
- Blood tests - baseline and regular blood tests will be required, due to the medications used in the treatment of heart failure affecting the kidneys.

Blood tests during your consultation can be taken, or you may be asked to have bloods taken at a phlebotomy site. The results will be reviewed, usually the following day, by the heart failure nurse. They are also passed to your GP. Depending on the results, it may be necessary to make changes to your medication. We will communicate with your consultant and/or GP and inform you of any changes needed.

- Prescriptions for changes to medication, either additional or increased, may be provided by the nurse. Alternatively, the heart failure nurse will ask your GP to prescribe this.

How to contact us

You can contact us on **01384 323158**.

If the nurses are not in the office, a clerical worker will endeavour to assist you or will be able to take a message and inform a nurse if required. Alternatively, after 4pm, you can leave a message on the answer machine, and you will be contacted within 24 hours.

During busy periods, your call may be directed to an answer machine. Please leave your name, number and GP practice.

If you need an urgent response outside office hours (8am to 4pm) please contact your GP or dial 111 for advice. In an emergency, please dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.

The British Heart Foundation (BHF) supports the Dudley community heart failure nurses. They also have a website which contains useful up-to-date information for people with heart conditions: www.bhf.org

The BHF produce a free magazine called Heart Matters which they'll send to you regularly for free. If you are interested in receiving this, please subscribe via the above website.

The Pumping Marvellous Foundation is a UK patient-led charity, offering support and helping people live well with heart failure. www.pumpingmarvellous.org

Other organisations involved in your care

Social services

With your agreement, part of your assessment by us **may** include a referral to social services. They will assess whether you need any help with everyday activities such as washing and dressing.
Contact number: 0300 555 0055.

Citizen Advice Bureaux (CAB)

If you have any concerns about legal, financial, housing and welfare issues, you can contact CAB on 08082787919.

Psychological support

We are here if you need advice or someone to talk to. With your consent, and if appropriate, we can also refer you for specialist professional support.

Action Heart Dudley - Exercise Rehabilitation Programme

Your heart failure nurse will offer this to you and, if you are in agreement, will refer you on your behalf.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

The community heart failure team on 01384 323158

Email: dgft.heart-failure-team@nhs.net

Address: Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre

John Corbett Drive

Stourbridge

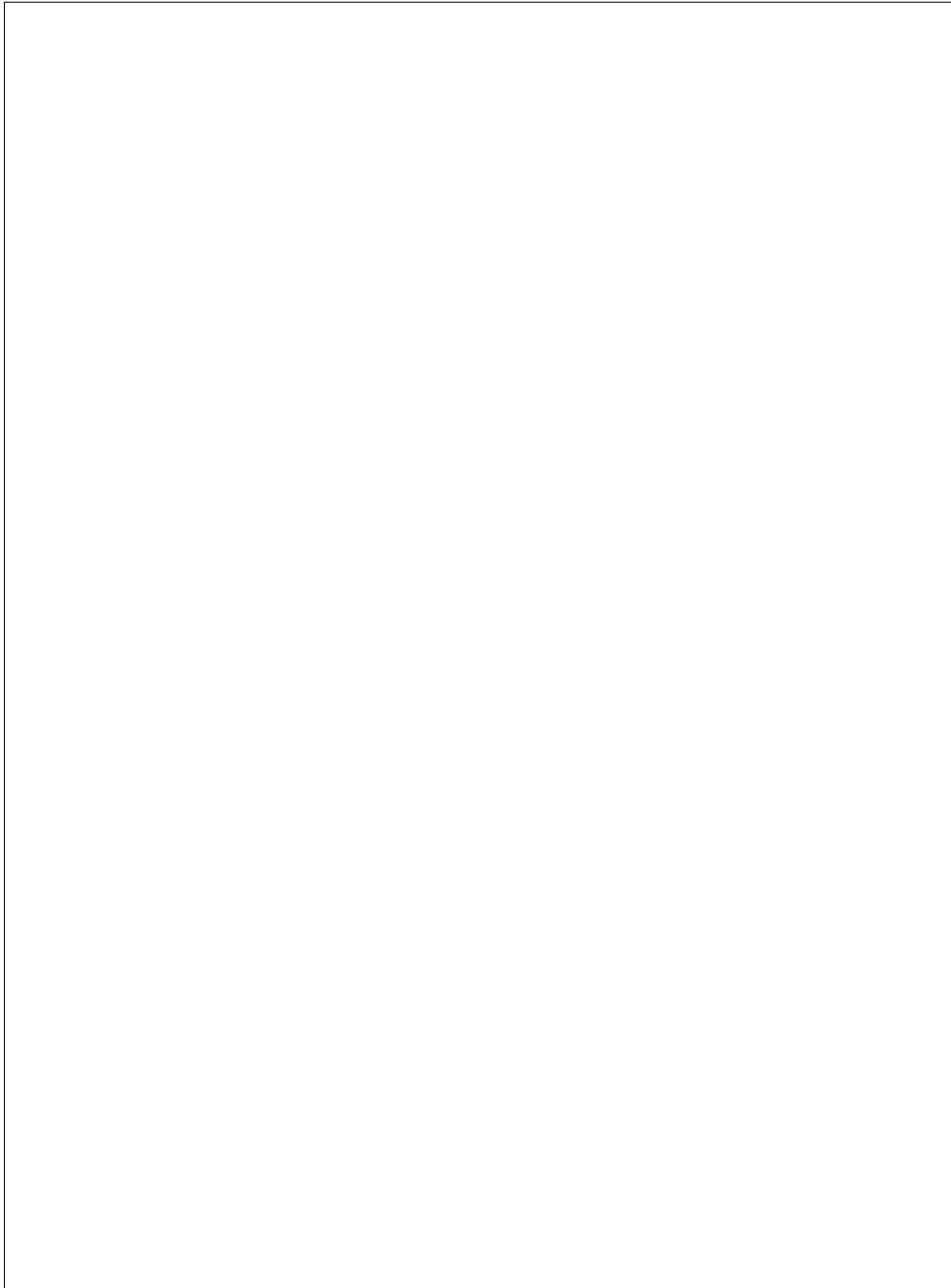
West Midlands

DY8 4JB

Feedback and compliments

The heart failure team aims to provide a high-quality service and hopes that you are satisfied with the care provided. Feedback is welcomed via the enclosed Friends and Family Test. What matters to you, matters to us.

Use this space for any notes you wish to make

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write notes.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

The community heart failure team on 01384 323158

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/heart-failure-community/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

للحصول على هذه النشرة بحجم أكبر، وعلى شكل إصدار صوتي و بلغات أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال بالرقم 08000730510.

此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm să sunați la 0800 073 0510.

یہ کتابچہ آپ کو بڑے حروف کی لکھائی، سمعی صورت اور دیگر زبانوں میں مہیا کیا جا سکتا ہے۔ برائے مہربانی فون نمبر 08000730510 پر رابطہ کریں۔