

Palliative Care Service

The Breathlessness Service

A Guide for Patients and Carers



Who is the Breathlessness Service for?

- It is for people with a life limiting illness whose quality of life is affected because they are suffering from breathlessness. This includes people who have conditions such as cancer, heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, for example.
- We also support relatives and carers.
- To achieve the most from the service we always recommend that patients come together with a relative or carers.

What does the service provide?

We provide one-to-one advice and support about how to manage breathlessness in a positive way. This will enable patients to maintain or improve their quality of life.

Who will I see in the clinic?

A specialist palliative care nurse, who has specialist knowledge of managing breathlessness and experience of caring for patients with life limiting illness.

Who can refer me to the service?

- Your hospital doctor or nurse, GP, community matron, community nurse, clinical nurse specialist or palliative care nurse can refer you to the service.
- We will then send you an appointment.
- Transport to the clinic is available if you need it, so please ask your GP for your first appointment.

What happens at the clinic?

On your first visit you will have an assessment of your breathlessness by the specialist nurse. This usually lasts an hour. We will then plan an individual programme with you to help you manage your breathlessness. Whilst we will not be able to cure your breathlessness, we will teach you techniques to be able to manage it so you are able to regain control. We will cover the following:

- Advice and support for you and your carer
- Ways to cope with your breathlessness
- Practical ways to get the most out of every day
- Assessment and reassessment
- Breathing exercises and relaxation techniques
- Aids and appliances
- Ways to pace yourself and plan daily activities
- Managing anxiety and fatigue
- Advice about medications and how to get the best from them
- Setting personal goals and planning ways to achieve them.

We work closely alongside other health care professionals. After your appointments we will write a letter to you to communicate the outcome of the assessment and any suggestions or changes. With your permission, this letter will also be sent to your GP and other healthcare professionals involved in your care.

Where and when is the clinic held?

Every Tuesday between 9am-1pm at the Colney Centre, Level 1, East Block, Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Further information

If you need more information or advice please contact:

Melanie Taylor, Hospital Specialist Palliative Care Nurse
Tel: 01603 287227 Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00 pm
An answerphone is available outside working hours.

Breathlessness Service at Priscilla Bacon Centre

There is also a breathlessness service at Priscilla Bacon Centre. They provide advice and support about how to manage breathlessness in a positive way in groups of up to 12 people. This is a four week programme for you and your carer.

If you would like to be referred to this service, please ask the healthcare professional involved in your care.