

## Oxygen Assessment Service: Ambulatory Oxygen Therapy

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

### What the service offers

The Oxygen Assessment Service has been set up to ensure that you are correctly prescribed oxygen.

Oxygen therapy increases the amount of oxygen in the bloodstream. If your oxygen levels drop when you are active, you might require ambulatory oxygen therapy.

### Where the service is provided

The Oxygen Assessment Service is located at a community hospital setting.

When you arrive at the hospital, please go to the Main Information Desk and ask for Outpatients Department Reception.

Clinics run on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

### Ambulatory oxygen

Ambulatory oxygen is supplied by portable equipment, and is to be used when you are exerting yourself outside of the home. Exertion can cause a drop in your oxygen levels because muscles use more oxygen when they are working harder. It is important that you are assessed correctly.

The assessment will include a six-minute walk test; the nurse will monitor your oxygen saturations, heart rate and respiration rate. This information will determine whether you would benefit from ambulatory oxygen therapy.

A discussion will then take place between you and your nurse as to what type of ambulatory oxygen equipment will best suit your activity levels and lifestyle when you are away from home.

**\*\*Ambulatory oxygen is for use away from the home setting not for use within the home setting\*\***

## How to be referred

You will usually be referred to the service by your GP or other healthcare professional.

You will receive an appointment letter which will confirm the date and time of your appointment. The letter will ask you to wear comfortable walking shoes and to bring any walking aids that are used on a regular basis. The letter will also ask you to bring your inhalers to the clinic.

You will also be asked to remove any nail varnish before your assessment to ensure the oxygen saturation monitor, which is placed on your fingertip, is able to read your oxygen levels clearly.

## What will happen at the first appointment

The appointment will last approximately 60 minutes.

You will be asked to do a walking test which will last for 6 minutes. We will ask you to walk as much as you can for 6 minutes but you can stop and rest whenever you require. We ask you not to talk whilst you carry out your walking test so that you conserve your energy levels.

We will measure how far you can walk, your heart rate, respiratory rate and the amount of oxygen in your blood, through a probe on your finger. We will also ask you to indicate how your legs are feeling.

You will then rest for 15 minutes, or longer if needed.

If your oxygen level falls during the first 6 minutes, we will then repeat the walking test with using oxygen. You will be required to carry the oxygen cylinder in a shoulder bag, or push the cylinder in an oxygen cylinder trolley.

This will be how you will use the oxygen when leaving home.

After both parts of the assessment, you will be informed whether or not you need oxygen at home.

If your assessment indicates that you need oxygen, then the nurse will discuss the equipment choices dependent on the flow rate required to maintain your oxygen levels whilst mobilising. You will be advised on the settings, when it is appropriate to use ambulatory oxygen, and the flow rate.

You will be required to complete a health and safety risk assessment as well as a data sharing consent form and a declaration form to ensure you comply with the health and safety regulations in place when using oxygen.

## Who's who

The assessment will be carried out by one of our oxygen assessment specialist nurses, Lesley Parsons and Linda Jordan. They are clinical nurse specialists in respiratory medicine working closely with the respiratory consultant team. Lesley and Linda both have experience in assessing patients in both hospital and community settings.

## Further information

Our Oxygen Assessment Service team will be happy to answer any questions you may have. For more information, please contact us on **01271 337811**.

You may wish to visit the British Lung Foundation web site as a useful information resource on respiratory diseases: [www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk)

### **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust  
Raleigh Park, Barnstaple  
Devon EX31 4JB  
Tel. 01271 322577  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk)

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Tel: 01271 313970 / email: [ndht.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.contactus@nhs.net)