Continence Promotion Service

Information for patients

This leaflet can be made available in other formats including large print, CD and Braille and in languages other than English, upon request.

This leaflet tells you about the Continence Promotion Service. It tells you what the service offers and how they can help you.

What is continence?

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

How can the service help me?

Bladder and bowel problems are very common. People are often too embarrassed to seek help.

There are many simple things that can be done to help you; these include:

- **urinary tract infection.** Pain or burning when passing urine (wee) could mean a urinary tract infection. You may notice your urine looks cloudy or smells. Sometimes an infection can be present without any symptoms so it is worth asking your GP or nurse to check this out.

- **prostate gland trouble.** Your GP will be able to assess (check) if this is a problem and advise you about treatment, especially if this is causing leakage.

- **possible side effects of some medication (drugs).** Some medications may affect how your bladder and bowel work. You should discuss this with your GP.

  You must not change the time you take your medication or stop taking your medication without speaking to your GP first.

- **severe constipation.** This can cause urinary incontinence due to pressure on the bladder.

  Bowel leakage can also occur when motions (poo) leaks around the hard stool blocking the bowel. It is important to discuss this with a healthcare professional.

- **memory problems.** Some people can lose their memory of what to do in the toilet or even where the toilet is.
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How can I help if I am caring for someone with this problem?

If the person cannot tell you when they need the toilet you should look for other signs such as wandering, fidgeting or pulling at clothes.

People can forget to drink or are reluctant to drink. We should drink 1.5 - 2 litres (3 – 4 pints) of fluid each day to keep our bladder and bowels healthy.

It may be helpful if the toilet door is left open and a light is left on at night to help direct them to the toilet.

Sometimes it can be helpful if a toilet routine is decided, keep to it and tell all carers. This means that if the person spends time apart from you, the routine to use the toilet is the same.

Your healthcare professional can advise you about all of the above or you can contact the Continence Service for more information.

The following leaflets are available:

- Stress urinary incontinence.
- Urge urinary incontinence.
- Pelvic floor exercises for women.
- Pelvic floor exercises for men.

Please ask your GP or nurse for a copy of these leaflets.

Bladder and bowel problems can be assessed and treated. This can improve your quality of life and make sure you can carry on with your everyday activities.

Patients are usually seen in clinic. Your first appointment will usually take about 40 minutes.

During this appointment your nurse will discuss:

- your symptoms and how they affect you.
- what type of fluid you drink and how much.
- how often you go to the toilet.
- your medical and surgical history.
- any medication you are taking.

After your assessment your nurse will discuss your treatment options and agree a plan of care with you.

Who can use this service?

The Continence Service is available to all adults living in the Stockton or Hartlepool area. Specialist nurses run these local clinics.
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If you are housebound you can contact your community nurse to arrange a home visit to discuss your problems.

How can I contact the Continence Service?

You can ask your GP, practice nurse or community nurse to refer you to the service.

You can contact the service yourself by contacting 01429 522500.

Doctors and nurses discuss these types of problems every day and are willing to listen to you.

Contact numbers

If you need further advice or have any worries or concerns, you should talk to your nurse or continence nurse.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust

Continence Advisor
telephone SPA patient line: 01429 522500
Monday – Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Further information is available from:

Bladder and Bowel Foundation
SATRA Innovation Park
Rockingham Park
Kettering
Northants
NN16 9JH
telephone: 0845 345 0165
or visit the website at www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org

PromoCon
(Offers product information, advice and practical solutions)
Disabled Living
Burrows House
10 Priestly Road
Wardley Industrial Estate
Worsley
Manchester
M28 2LY
telephone helpline: 0161 607 8219
or visit the website at promocon@disabledliving.co.uk
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RADAR KEYS (for disabled toilet access)
11 Church Street
Exmouth
EX8 1PE
telephone: 01395 222588
or visit the website at www.radar.org.uk

Information used in the development of this leaflet:

This leaflet has been produced in partnership with patients and carers. All patient leaflets are regularly reviewed, and any suggestions you have as to how it may be improved are extremely valuable. Please write to the Quality Assurance Team, University Hospital of North Tees or email: patientinformation@nth.nhs.uk.

Comments, Concerns, Compliments or Complaints

We are continually trying to improve the services we provide.

We want to know what we’re doing well or if there’s anything which we can improve, that’s why the Patient Experience Team is here to help.

Our Patient Experience Team is here to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible. If you would like to contact or request a copy of our PET leaflet, please contact:

- telephone: 01642 624719
  Monday – Friday, 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
  Messages can be left on the answering machine and will be picked up throughout the day.

- freephone: 0800 092 0084
  Mobile: (can use text): 0779 561 883
  Email: patientexperience@nth.nhs.uk

Out of hours if you wish to speak to a senior member of Trust staff, please contact the hospital switchboard who will bleep the appropriate person.

- telephone: 01642 617617
  24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The Patient Experience Team is available to discuss your concerns in person Monday – Friday, 1.30 pm – 4.30 pm.

Data Protection and use of patient information

The Trust has developed a Data Protection Policy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All of our staff respect this policy and confidentiality is adhered to at all times. If you require further information please contact the Head of Communications.

- telephone: 01642 624339 or www.dataprotection.gov.uk

University Hospital of North Tees, Hardwick, Stockton-on-Tees. TS19 8PE
University Hospital of Hartlepool, Holdforth Road, Hartlepool. TS24 9AH

Telephone: 01642 617617 Fax: 01642 624089