

## **The Spine Service** **at** **Sussex MSK Partnership East**

**Sussex MSK Partnership East is a local NHS service for patients with muscle, bone and joint problems. These are called musculoskeletal conditions, usually shortened to MSK.**

**You have been referred to our Spine Service so that our specialist clinicians can investigate and provide a care plan for your condition.**

Your first appointment is at one of our community Spine clinics. Rather than going to an out-patient clinic at the hospital, our clinics are held in the community or within GP practices, which usually means that you can be seen by a specialist closer to your home.

### **Where are The Spine Service clinics located?**

- Crowborough
- Eastbourne
- Hailsham
- Peacehaven
- Seaford

### **What should I bring with me to my appointment?**

Please bring information of any medication that you are currently taking. This information will help the specialist in their assessment and treatment of your condition.

You may need to undress to your underwear for the physical examination, so you may like to wear loose clothing or bring gym shorts or something similar to wear.

### **What can I expect to happen in my appointment?**

Your first appointment could last for up to 30 minutes. You will see one of our specialist spine clinicians, called an Extended Scope Practitioner (ESP). Spine ESPs are experienced physiotherapists who have specialist training in spinal conditions. He or she will ask you about your symptoms and your medical history.

The ESP will examine you and may assess your whole body. If you would like a chaperone or translator please contact our Patient Care Advisor team to let us know before your appointment. You can bring a friend or family member with you to your appointment too if you prefer.

The ESP will talk to you about your condition and discuss the next steps with you.

## How can I get the most out of my appointment?

On the back of the enclosed letter is a set of questions and suggestions to help you prepare for your appointment. Remember to take your questions with you.

## What will happen after my appointment?

After your appointment our Patient Care Advisor team may contact you to:

- Book a follow up appointment or a telephone consultation
- Arrange for our diagnostic team to arrange tests such as an x-ray, ultrasound or MRI scan. If you do require one of these, the ESP will provide you with further information about the procedure
- Refer you to a hospital of your choice if further treatment is required
- Discharge you back to the care of your GP. Both you and your GP will receive a written summary following your appointment with the ESP.

## What should I expect from your service?

Whenever you have contact with Sussex MSK Partnership East, you will be treated fairly, regardless of race, sexuality, disability, age, gender or religion. We will work with you and involve you in decisions about your care. We take the safety of all patients using our services seriously and are committed to ensuring that all patients feel safe.

## How can I help improve your service?

You will shortly receive a questionnaire, via letter, email or text, asking you about how your MSK problem is affecting you now and some other questions about your experience of the service to date. After you have been discharged, or after a course of treatment, we will send you another set of questions. Again, these will ask about your condition and how you felt you were looked after.

We would really appreciate it if you would complete these as we need your feedback to judge how we are doing. We will act on what you tell us.

## Who do I contact if I have any questions?

Whilst you are under our care, your point of contact for your spine condition is Sussex MSK Partnership East.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact our Patient Care Advisor team by phone on: **0300 300 0003 (local call rate, Monday to Friday, 8am – 7pm)** or email [smskp.east@nhs.net](mailto:smskp.east@nhs.net).

You can also visit our website at [www.sussexmskpartnershipeast.co.uk](http://www.sussexmskpartnershipeast.co.uk) for more information.