

# The Outpatient Parenteral Antimicrobial Therapy (OPAT) Service

**This leaflet aims to provide you with information about the OPAT service. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## What is OPAT?

Antibiotics are medicines active against bacteria that can cause a significant infection. They can be given orally (by mouth) or injected into a vein – this is called intravenous (IV) or parenteral therapy. IV parenteral antibiotics are usually given to patients in hospital but some can also be given safely in the patient's own home. When treatment is given at home, this is called OPAT.

## How will the antibiotics be given?

The antibiotics are given as a short injection or over a slightly longer time as an infusion. How it is given depends on the type of antibiotic and the dose that you need. Before discharge from hospital, a flexible tube will be put in to one of your veins so that you can receive your antibiotics. There are two types of flexible tubes used routinely in our hospitals: a cannula and a PICC line (peripherally inserted central catheter). The tube you require depends on the type of antibiotic that you need and the length of time that you need them for. At the end of your antibiotic treatment the nurses will remove the cannula or PICC line in your home, you do not need to have this done in hospital.

Be careful not to knock or catch the cannula/PICC line as this may be painful and could also dislodge it from your vein. You must keep the cannula/PICC line dressing clean, dry and away from pets.

**Cannula:** If there are problems with your cannula and the community nurses have been unable to resolve it you will need to return to hospital for a new cannula to be fitted.

**PICC line (See also 'The Peripherally Inserted Cannula (PICC)' leaflet):** If your PICC line becomes blocked, infected or dislodged you will need to return to hospital to have this investigated and in some circumstances have the PICC line replaced. **If you experience any redness, swelling or pain around the PICC line you must seek immediate medical attention by calling 999 or attending an Accident and Emergency Department.**

## Can I have a bath or shower with a PICC/cannula?

You can bathe and shower with a PICC/cannula in place but you must take care to keep it out of the water whilst bathing. Keep the PICC/cannula clean and dry by covering it with an additional waterproof dressing. If the dressing becomes loose after your bath/shower it will need to be replaced. Please refrain from showering or bathing for 24 hours after having a PICC line fitted.

## What are the benefits of this service?

You can have your treatment without having to stay in hospital. The benefits include being at home in familiar and comfortable surroundings, allowing you to be independent and there are less risks than being in hospital such as blood clots and infections.

## What are the risks to me?

You will receive at least one dose of your antibiotic in a supervised setting. In some circumstances this may be in your own home, the antibiotic will be administered by a person competent and equipped to identify and manage allergic reactions. **Allergic reactions can occur with any medicine and therefore you should seek immediate medical attention if you develop any symptoms whilst at home such as a rash, facial swelling or difficulty in breathing.**

Occasionally the cannula or PICC line can become blocked or an infection can develop – see above information.

## Who delivers the service?

Although you have been discharged home you will remain the responsibility of the hospital consultant in charge of your care and will be reviewed at the Outpatient Clinic.

The community team provide nurses that will visit you in your home and administer your antibiotic.

Calderdale Community Nursing Team give antibiotics to patients living in the Calderdale area and Locala Community Partnerships give antibiotics to patients living in the Kirklees area. The number of nursing visits to your home depends on the antibiotic you need. The nurses will also look after your cannula or PICC line. They will carry out weekly dressing changes and take blood samples for the hospital to monitor your progress. You must be at home for the nurses to visit, it is important that you do not miss any doses of your antibiotic. The visits can be arranged around medical appointments. Pets must be put in another room whilst you are having your antibiotic. You must not smoke in the property during the nursing visit.

Occasionally it may not be possible for the community nurses to undertake all the visits. In these situations, you may need to come to hospital on a daily basis to be given your antibiotics in a hospital clinic. These options will be discussed with you when the decision is made to refer you to the OPAT service.

## How long will my treatment last?

You may require a few days of antibiotics or several weeks depending on the nature of the infection. This may be followed by a further course of oral antibiotics. During your home intravenous antibiotic treatment you will remain under the care of your hospital doctor. The hospital OPAT team review all the patients on the service once a week, checking blood results and ensuring follow up appointments have been made if required.

## Where do I get supplies of the antibiotic?

When you are discharged from hospital, the pharmacy will supply everything you will need to have your antibiotics at home. If you are having a long course, then supplies may be delivered out to your home in instalments.

## Useful Telephone Numbers

**For patients with a Calderdale GP:** 07795 825106 (Mon - Fri 08.00 - 16.00)  
(Out of hours - night-time, weekends, bank holidays - 01422 652291)

**For patients with a Kirklees GP:** Locala IV Team – 07908 529195 (Mon - Fri 08.00 - 17.00)  
(Out of hours - night-time, weekends, bank holidays - 0300 304 5555)

**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

OPAT Lead Nurse  
Calderdale Royal Hospital  
Telephone: 07795 825106

Locala IV Team  
Telephone: 07908 529195

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

**If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.**

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce,  
obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych  
informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej,  
prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww.  
danych kontaktowych

ਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਚੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,  
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسری اور فارمیٹ طرزبان می درکار ہوں، تو  
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے می ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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المذكور أعلاه"