



**PATIENT PROCEDURE INFORMATION LEAFLET**

# **BIOFEEDBACK CLINIC**

## Introduction

You have been referred by your consultant for a course of biofeedback (bowel retraining) with the physiologist. Following your recent tests your consultant has suggested that you may benefit from biofeedback for your bowel symptoms.

This leaflet is intended to answer some of the questions you may have about your forthcoming biofeedback appointment.

## What is biofeedback?

Biofeedback is a technique used for selected patients suffering from either faecal incontinence (involuntary leakage of solid/liquid stool or wind) or constipation.

Biofeedback involved either retraining muscles to relax or strengthen muscle tone in your back passage depending upon your symptoms.

The training of muscles can take some time and a biofeedback programme usually lasts an average of 6 months. It also aims to improve your quality of life.

## Why do I need this training?

The muscles in the back passage can become weak because of damage during childbirth or surgery to just through age. The muscles can also lose the ability to relax effectively.

Tests you have had previously have shown some weakness or lack of co-ordination of the muscles in your back passage.

Biofeedback is a relatively simple, non-painful course of training and exercise to try and give some strength or co-ordination back to these muscles.

## What are the risks, benefits and alternatives?

- Biofeedback is safe and has no known side effects.
- In some patients insertion of the probe into the back passage may cause slight discomfort, but should not be painful.
- Results from the programme are largely dependent upon your commitment and effort with the exercises you will be given to do at home.
- A small portion of patients do not find any benefit from it.
- In many patients biofeedback is an alternative to surgery.

## **What does biofeedback involve?**

Following initial assessment with the physiologist you will be asked to removed your underclothing and lie on a couch. Your privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times throughout your appointment.

You will not be put to sleep or given any sedation.

Biofeedback involves inserting a small probe into your back passage with your consent. The probe is connected to a computer machine. You will be asked to squeeze and relax your back passage at certain times and you will be able to see your progress on a screen.

During your follow up appointments the probe will usually be in place for 5-10 minutes, this allows both you and the physiologist to check the effort of the exercises you will have practiced at home on the muscles in your back passage.

## **Do I need to do anything before my appointment?**

- There is no special preparation for this appointment.
- You can eat and drink normally before your appointment
- You do not need to have opened your bowels on the day of your appointment.
- You will not need to take any medication to clear your bowel before your appointment e.g.an enema or suppositories

## **What should I expect at my first appointment?**

- At your first appointment you will meet the physiologist who will go through your previous test results.
- The physiologist will ask you about your general health including medication, diet and bowel symptoms.
- From this initial assessment the physiologist will discuss your individual treatment programme with you.
- Your programme can consist of exercises, diet and lifestyle changes.
- You will be given written information about exercises to do at home
- This appointment lasts approximately 1 hour.

## **Follow up appointments**

The biofeedback programme will include several visits usually over a six month period. This can vary from patient to patient. Follow up appointments will last approximately 30-40 minutes.

In order to obtain the best results you need to follow the agreed programme. We can give you the information, exercises and advice but only you can make the difference. The exercise programme is hard work and once learned should become part of your daily life.

## **Will I be able to go back to work?**

Yes. After your appointment you will be able to continue your day as normal.

## **What happens at the end of treatment?**

The physiologist will inform both your consultant and GP of the results of your biofeedback programme. Your consultant will arrange an appointment to see you again in their clinic if necessary.

## **Where can I find the biofeedback clinic?**

- Located within the Endoscopy Department at the University Hospitals of North Midlands.
- You will need to report to reception on arrival

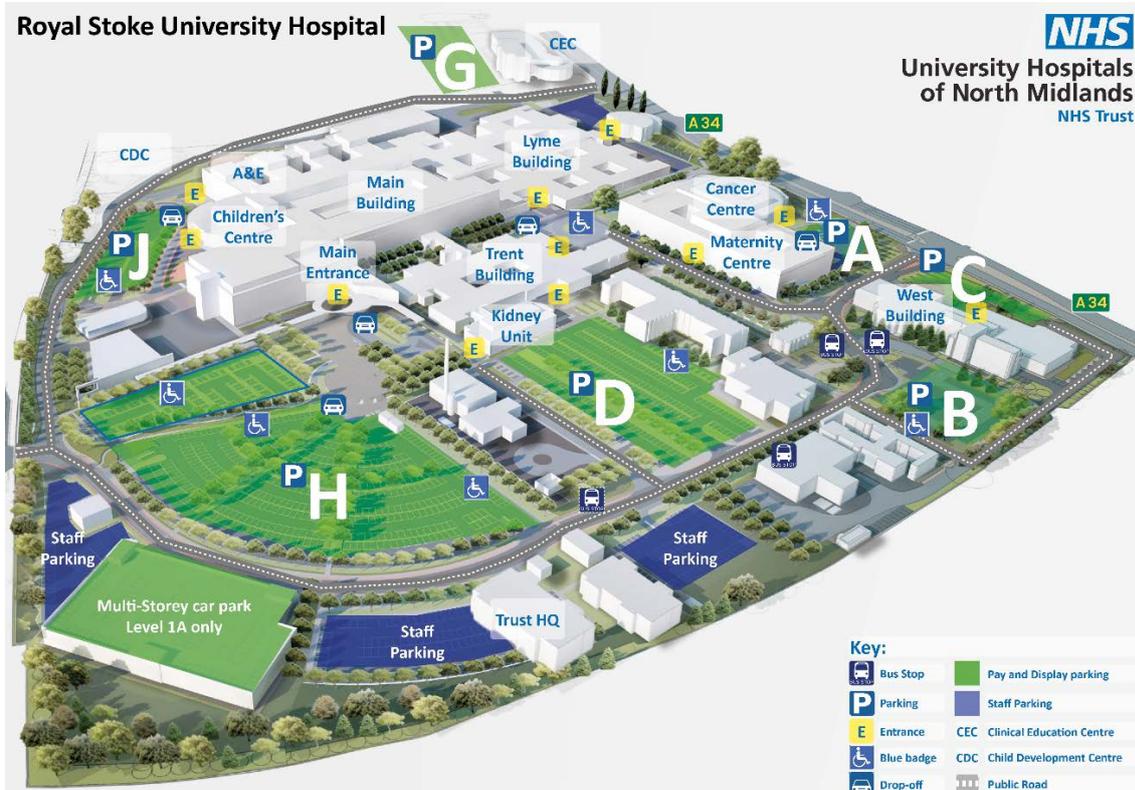
## **What happens if I have any problems?**

If you have any questions either before or after your appointment you can contact the physiologist on telephone number 01782 675715. You may leave a message on the answer phone and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

If you need to change your appointment, please contact the booking office on 01782 676006

## Getting Here

Royal Stoke Hospital, Newcastle Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 6QG.



**Please note car parking charges will apply.**

There is a shuttle bus service from County to Royal Stoke at a charge of £5 return. Please call 01782 824232 to arrange a place on the bus.