

Polypharmacy Service

Information for patients and clinicians

About the Service

'**Polypharmacy**' means taking multiple medicines or drugs.

Taking multiple medicines is often required to help patients who have more than one illness. However, the risk of problems (including side effects) increases as the number of drugs increases.

To reduce the risk of problems, people taking multiple medicines should have regular medication reviews.

The Polypharmacy Service is run by **Clinical Pharmacologists** (doctors with a special interest in medicines). There are four consultants and four junior doctors and they work closely with pharmacists, GPs and other clinical staff.

The Polypharmacy service offers:

- Review Clinic for patients with complex polypharmacy
- Advice & Guidance Service for clinicians
- Skills Development Network for clinicians.

Information for Clinicians

Referral to the Review Clinic for patients with complex polypharmacy

St George's clinicians should refer to **Clinical Pharmacology** via iCLIP.

External clinicians should refer via eRS or email to stgh-tr.clinpharm.enquiries@nhs.net

See the **Clinical Pharmacology** page on St George's intranet for more information.

Advice and Guidance

Any clinician in South West London can use our Advice & Guidance service to ask questions or request advice. Please use either of the following systems:

- **Kinesis:** Search for **Clinical Pharmacology** and send a message to the group.
- **eRS:** Search for **Clinical Pharmacology & Polypharmacy** in the General Medicine filter.

Skills Development Network

To access resources and learn more about the Skills Development Network please visit the **Clinical Pharmacology** pages on St George's Trust internet website

www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Review Clinic for patients with complex polypharmacy

About the Clinic

Your GP or hospital doctor may refer you to our clinic if they think you might benefit from a review with a Clinical Pharmacologist.

During the appointment we will talk about your medicines. There may be some that are working well, others that are causing side effects, some that you don't need any more and new medicines that you are not taking that could help.

Letter

If you agree to the referral you will receive a letter in the post. This will tell you more about the appointment and when it will be.

There are instructions about how to cancel or re-arrange if you change your mind.

What to expect

Before the Appointment

- Please make a **list of all the medicines you take** including any prescription medicines or any you buy from a shop or chemist, such as herbal remedies.
- You are welcome to ask a friend or family member to join the appointment if you wish.
- To prepare for the appointment, your doctor will have read your medical notes to check that your medical conditions and the medicines you take match up.

During the Appointment

- Your clinic appointment will be by telephone and will take about 30 minutes.
- The first thing we'll do is find out what matters to you so we can work together to make decisions about your medicines.
- After our discussion we'll write down what was said so you have a record of the conversation.

After the Appointment

- If we decide together that your medicines should change, we will let your GP know so they can change your prescription.
- We will offer you a follow-up appointment if needed.

Contact us

Clinical Pharmacology Team

Email: stgh-tr.clinpharm.enquiries@nhs.net

Website: If you are interested in learning more about our team please visit the Clinical Pharmacology pages on St George's Trust internet website www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Useful Telephone Numbers

Hospital Switchboard: 020 8672 1255

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk).

The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.