

# The Lawson Unit

The Lawson Unit is a specialist center offering treatment, support and ongoing care for people living with HIV.

The Lawson Unit is the leading centre for HIV care on the south coast, and one of the largest in the UK. We have an international reputation for clinical care and research.

## Contact details and opening times

The Lawson Unit, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Eastern Road,  
Brighton, BN2 5BE **Telephone 01273 664722**

Monday	7:30am	-	4:45pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Tuesday	7:30am	-	4:45pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Wednesday	12:00pm	-	4:30pm	
Thursday	7:30am	-	4:45pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Friday	7:30am	-	4:45pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)

We offer a women's only clinic, called the Sunflower clinic which runs every other Friday Morning (9:30-1:00pm) appointment by referral

For HIV related out of hours queries - Please contact Courtyard 6  
**01273 523061**

# Nurse Appointments

## Blood tests appointments

These appointments are for routine blood tests and should not take any longer than 20 minutes.

## Annual health checks

We also provide an annual health check where we will discuss and assess aspects of your physical and psychological health.

This appointment takes approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour but some of the assessments can be done at routine appointments.

## Sexual health screening

All patients are offered sexual health screening. This can include review of vaccinations, contraception review and cervical smears.

We offer self-collected swabs for people without any symptoms of an infection. This can be done as part of your routine appointments and will be explained to you before you use them.

## Patients transferring their care

You will be seen by a senior nurse prior to your appointment with a doctor. Please allow a little extra time as it is important that we can spend some time with you discussing your previous care and current health. This can take 45 minutes.

**If you have difficulties attending your appointments please talk to a member of staff**

## Doctor Appointments

### **Will I always see the same doctor?**

We work in teams which consist of senior doctors, junior doctors, and nurses and where possible you will be seen by the same doctor or someone from your that team.

### **How often will I need to come to the clinic?**

Initially you may need to be seen more frequently, but more stable patients may only need to be seen every six months to a year. We want you to get the best from your appointment with the doctor.

It is really helpful if you have up to date blood tests. Blood tests should be arranged at least two weeks before your appointment with the doctor/specialist nurse so they can discuss these results with you.

### **What is the CONNECT Email service?**

CONNECT is an e-mail service which may be suitable for patients whose HIV is stable on treatment.

This means in a 12 month period you would only need to attend three appointments: two nurse /blood appointments (including an annual health check) and one appointment with a doctor.

Instead of a second doctor appointment, your results will be emailed to you.

## Can I take part in Research?

We conduct a variety and range of clinical research studies, these may include:

### HIV Treatment Studies

- New therapies to treat HIV
- Strategy studies –How best to use the medications available to treat HIV

### HIV Prevention Studies

- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

### HIV Co-infection with Hep C

- New Anti-Hep C therapies

### HIV and Ageing

- Impact on future service delivery
- Effects of HIV and Ageing

### HIV management studies

- Emerge – patient mobile phone application study

### Sexual Health and Contraception

- Novel testing & treatments for Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV

### HIV in Women

- Effect of ARVs on bone
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding studies

During a routine appointment, if you are thought to be suitable for a study this will be discussed with you by your Doctor or Nurse and if you wish, you will be referred to the research team for a discussion about the study and other treatment options available to you.

You can contact the Research Team on 01273 523079

## What HIV Pharmacy support is available?

### The HIV specialist pharmacy team is based in the Lawson Unit:

- We see all patients who start or switch antiretrovirals (ARVs)
- We can answer any questions and provide advice and support regarding your medicines
- We review all Lawson unit prescriptions before they can be dispensed.

Contact the pharmacy team on 01273 664948  
during Lawson Unit opening hours,  
or email [pharmacy.seh@bsuh.nhs.uk](mailto:pharmacy.seh@bsuh.nhs.uk)

Once your prescription has been screened at the Lawson unit please take it to Pharm@Sea, which is the outpatient pharmacy for the Hospital.

If you have a question about a prescription given to Pharm@Sea you can contact them on 01273 523257  
or email [pharm.sea@bsuh.nhs.uk](mailto:pharm.sea@bsuh.nhs.uk)

You will need to tell them your clinic number

### Medicines home delivery (from Alcura Health)

Please discuss with your doctor and pharmacist if you would like your HIV medicines delivered to your home (or any UK) address. If you need to contact Alcura for issues regarding your delivery, please ring 0800 9800686 or 01604 433500.

## How do I make sure I don't run out of medicines?

Please make a note of how many tablets you have at home before coming to each appointment. You will be given a prescription by your doctor to last until your next visit. If you realise you are running low and don't have enough until you see your doctor, please contact the Lawson unit pharmacy team on the number above, allowing at least 24 hours for your prescription to be written.

## What do I do if I'm unwell?

- We offer a telephone triage system in the Lawson unit during opening hours.
- Triage is a way to assess and direct you to the most appropriate treatment or centre.
- If you feel unwell or are concerned you may have an HIV related issue, phone the clinic and one of our reception staff will take your details and arrange for one of the nurses to contact you and discuss your concerns, and advise you of the most appropriate action.
- If not within Lawson unit opening times out-of-hours queries should be directed to Courtyard 6 (HIV inpatients unit) on [01273 523061](tel:01273523061).
- Your GP can still provide routine care not related to HIV.

## Does my GP need to know my HIV status?

- We encourage all of our patients to register with a GP.
- With your permission we will regularly communicate with your GP advising of any changes in your HIV care.
- Many patients have problems unrelated to HIV which GPs can manage safely.

## Do you have links to other services?

We have excellent links with other departments including oncology, hepatitis clinics, rheumatology, dietetics, chest medicine and antenatal services, and we have many also have joint clinics with other specialties.

We have pathways in place that will help with any other treatments or appointments you may need from other specialties. We also work closely with other organisations such as THT (Terrence Higgins Trust), HIV community support team, MHRRS (Mental Health Rapid response Service) along with various Drug and Alcohol services.

## Useful Web links

[www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)  
[www.hivaware.org.uk](http://www.hivaware.org.uk)  
[www.i-base.info](http://www.i-base.info)  
[www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)  
[www.lifewithhiv.org.uk](http://www.lifewithhiv.org.uk)  
[www.positivelyuk.org](http://www.positivelyuk.org)  
[www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)

## HIV support services in Brighton & Hove

**Peer Action**  
([www.peeraction.co.uk](http://www.peeraction.co.uk))

**Sussex Beacon**  
([www.sussexbeacon.org.uk](http://www.sussexbeacon.org.uk))

**Terrence Higgins Trust**  
([www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk))

**Lunch Positive**  
([www.lunchpositive.org](http://www.lunchpositive.org))

## Local LGBT support

[www.switchboard.org.uk](http://www.switchboard.org.uk)  
[www.mindout.org.uk](http://www.mindout.org.uk)

  
**The Lawson Unit**  
LEADING HIV CARE FOR BRIGHTON

Named Health Adviser \_\_\_\_\_

Named Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic Number \_\_\_\_\_

## Upcoming dates

New Patient / Post discharge Appointment \_\_\_\_\_

**Health Advisers:** 01272 664716

**Nurses:** 01272 664722 opt 2

**Courtyard 6:** 01272 523061

If you have a special requirement (for example, related beliefs or an allergy/disability) please contact the reception team on **01273 664722**

If you have vision, mobility or access issues please contact the reception team on **01273 664722** for further advice / information.

© Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

#### Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

Ref number: 227.2

Publication Date: June 2019

Review Date: June 2021

