

Patients requesting a change of consultant or second opinion

Patient Information Leaflet

About this leaflet

This leaflet is for patients, or their carers who are requesting a change of consultant or would like a second opinion.

How to change a consultant

If you want to change your consultant you should make a request in writing giving your reasons. If you are unable to make a request in writing you can ask a member of staff, who will help you. You can also get help from service user and carer organisations or other professionals. There is a list of useful organisations at the back of this booklet.

The request should be addressed to the relevant manager. This may be different, depending on where the service you are in, or if you have a medical consultant, nurse consultant or psychology consultant. If you feel uncertain, you could get clarity about this by asking a member of staff. The contact details for managers are listed at the back of this booklet.

Changing your consultant

Once you have made your request there is a two-week waiting period. This gives the consultant, yourself, and anyone else involved time to consider your request. This means that the reasons you gave for why you wish to change your consultant can be carefully considered and whether the issues you raised can be resolved without changing consultant.

If a change is not considered helpful, the reasons behind it will be discussed with you. If you need any help with the decision, someone will be appointed to support you.

In certain situations, a delay of two weeks may be unacceptable or have an unnecessarily bad impact on either you or your consultant. In these cases, the manager involved will ensure an immediate change goes ahead.

What happens next

After the two-week period, if the professionals involved in your care do not think that changing your consultant would be helpful to you, these reasons will be discussed with you by your consultant or another member of the team. If you accept these reasons, then you will stay with your original consultant and the consultant will make a record of this in your patient record.

If after this discussion you still want to change your consultant, then the consultant will discuss this with the appropriate Manager, who will review the decision and make a final decision whether your care will be transferred to another consultant or not. You will be informed at every stage of the decision making.

If after the two-week period, it is decided that a change of consultant is appropriate then your consultant will find an appropriate alternative colleague and will transfer your care to a consultant colleague who will take over the management of your care. Once a new consultant is identified, your care team may discuss with you any disadvantage or risk of you moving to their care if this exists. You will then be able to decide if this is acceptable to you. If both you and the new consultant is happy to transfer your care, this decision will be recorded in your patient record, and you will be informed.

The new consultant is likely to work in the same area or with the same team, which makes changing easier. However, other consultants can be chosen. If for any reasons your consultant cannot find a colleague, who can take over your care the appropriate manager will find one on your behalf.

When your care is being transferred, a decision will be made about whether it is just the consultant's part of your care that will be transferred or whether all your care will be transferred to a new team.

You will be asked about this. In the circumstances where you see a consultant in one team but professionals from a different Community Mental Health Team the advantages and disadvantages of this will be discussed with you and you will be able to decide about whether this is acceptable to you.

Specialist Services

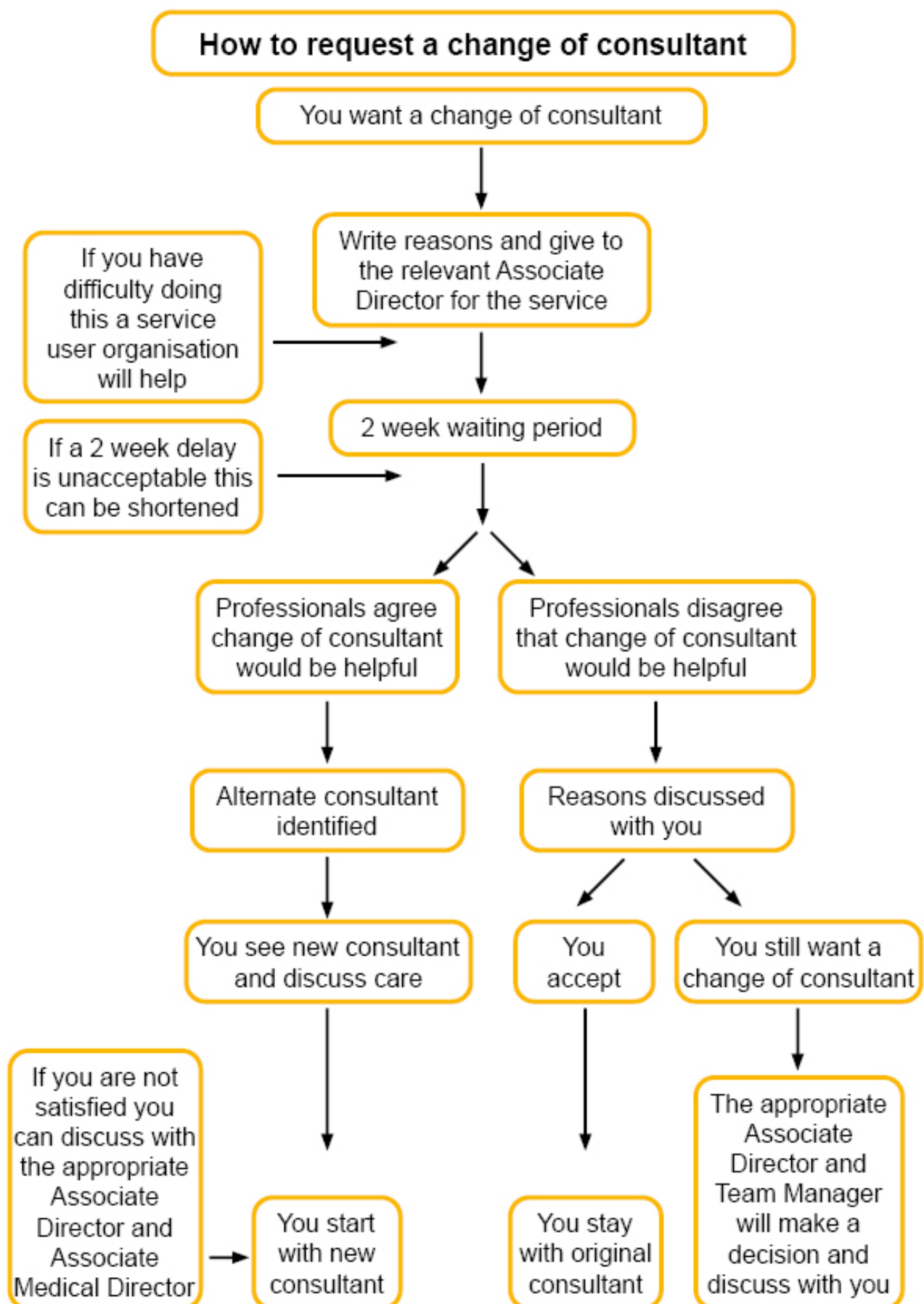
In certain specialist services, for example the mother and baby service, there is only one consultant in the service with no alternative consultant locally to change to. In these services it may be difficult to change consultant. If a request is made to change consultant in one of these services, the appropriate manager will discuss the request with you to see if a solution can be found.

If the ultimate solution includes the transfer of your care, the same process will be followed as we explained above.

What do I do if I'm not happy with the outcome of the process?

After the process is finished, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, please inform either your consultant or another member of your team and a discussion will take place with the appropriate Associate Director and Associate Medical Director.

Flowchart – How to request a change of consultant



How to seek a second opinion

The information below describes how, and in what circumstances, you, or someone else may seek a second opinion on your behalf.

A consultant treating you may think a second opinion would be helpful and may suggest this to you. It is up to you whether you see another consultant.

If you would like a second opinion, you can request this from your consultant, who may think this is appropriate and help you find a second opinion.

Your GP (General Practitioner) is also able to ask for a second opinion if they think it is necessary. They would need your agreement and could discuss it directly with our consultant.

If it is difficult for you to request a second opinion from the consultant that you are seeing, then you can ask another professional member of the team or ask a service user organisation to help you in this request.

In a situation where your consultant does not feel a second opinion would be helpful or appropriate, the consultant will ask the opinion of other people involved in your care such as other mental health professionals, your general practitioner, your carers, and your relatives. If the consultant does not think you should have a second opinion, they should explain this to you and record this in your patient record.

If the consultant does not think you should have a second opinion and after discussion with you, you still want a second opinion the consultant will involve the appropriate manager, who will decide as to whether a second opinion should be sought.

If you are between 16-18 years of age and your parents requested a second opinion, we will ask your permission.

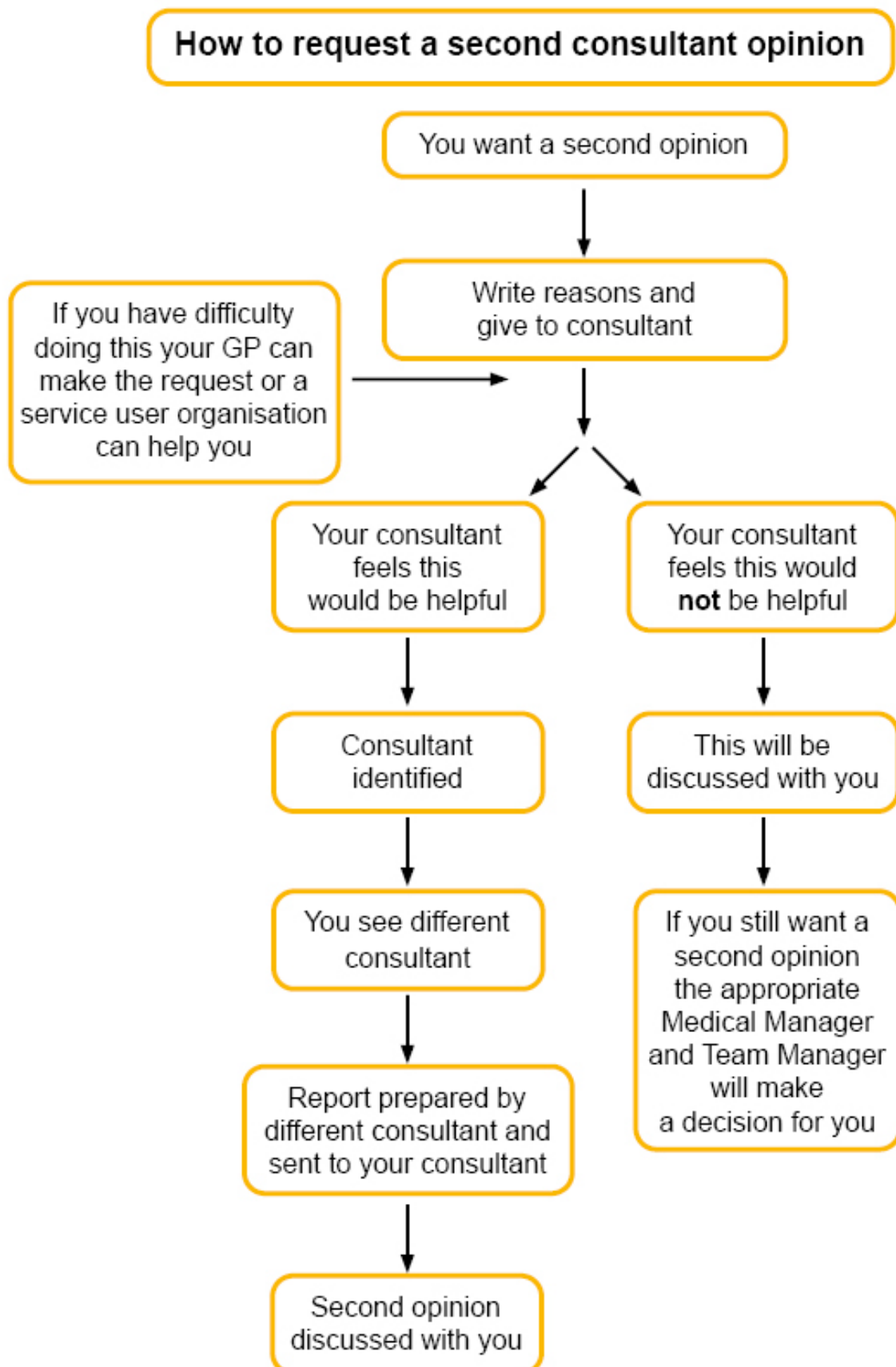
How will the second opinion be given?

After you have seen another consultant for a second opinion this will be provided in a written report, that you can see, if you want to.

Who will give the second opinion?

When asking for a second opinion, in the first place, we would hope that that you will accept whoever is suggested to you. In practice this is likely to be your consultant's cross-cover partner or another consultant whose areas of interest or expertise are appropriate to your clinical situation. If any difficulties arise identifying a second opinion, we will talk to the appropriate manager, who will help to find a suitable consultant for the second opinion.

Flowchart – How to request a second opinion



Associate Director contact details: Northumberland and North Tyneside

Access North Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northlocality@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis and Home Treatment • Recovery Partnership • Liaison 	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU
Community North Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northlocality@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Mental Health Services 	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU
Inpatient North Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northlocality@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health • Older Peoples' Service • Learning Disabilities and Autism 	Associate Directors St George's Park Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2NU

Associate Director contact details: Newcastle and Gateshead

Access Central Clinical Business Unit Email: CentrallnPatientCBUDirectors@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis and Home Treatment • Drug and Alcohol Service • Liaison 	Associate Directors Hartside Offices St Nicholas Hospital Jubilee Road, Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT
Community Central Clinical Business Unit Email: CentrallnPatientCBUDirectors@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Mental Health Services • Day Hospital 	Associate Directors Hartside Offices St Nicholas Hospital Jubilee Road, Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT
Inpatient Central Clinical Business Unit Email: CentrallnPatientCBUDirectors@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health • Older Peoples' Service 	Associate Directors Hartside Offices St Nicholas Hospital Jubilee Road, Gosforth Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3XT
Secure Care Services Clinical Business Unit Email: CentrallnPatientCBUDirectors@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure Services • Secure Outreach Treatment 	Associate Directors Northgate Hospital Morpeth Northumberland, NE61 3BP

Associate Director contact details: Sunderland and South Tyneside

Access South Clinical Business Unit Email: SouthAccessCBUAdm@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis and Home Treatment • Addiction Service • Liaison • Veterans Service 	Associate Directors Hopewood Park Waterworks Road, Ryhope Sunderland, SR2 0NB
Community South Clinical Business Unit Email: SouthAccessCBUAdm@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Mental Health Services • Older Adults Day Service 	Associate Directors Monkwearmouth Hospital Newcastle Road Sunderland, SR5 1NB
Inpatient South Clinical Business Unit Email: SouthInpatientCBUAdmin@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health • Older Peoples' Service • Learning Disabilities and Autism 	Associate Directors Hopewood Park Waterworks Road, Ryhope Sunderland, SR2 0NB
Neurological Services and Specialist Mental Health Services Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-NeuroandSpecialist@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurological Services • Specialist Mental Health Services • Specialist Psychological Therapies • Perinatal Community 	Associate Directors Walkergate Park Centre for Neurorehabilitation and Neuropsychiatry Benfield Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE6 4QD

Associate Director contact details: North Cumbria

Access and Community North Cumbria Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northcumbria@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis Teams • Liaison • Community Mental Health Services • Psychological Therapies • Learning Disabilities and Autism 	Associate Directors Carleton Clinic Cumwhinton Drive Carlisle Cumbria CA1 3SX
Inpatient North Cumbria Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northcumbria@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Mental Health • Older Peoples' Service • Learning Disabilities 	Associate Directors Carleton Clinic Cumwhinton Drive Carlisle Cumbria CA1 3SX
Specialist Children and Young Peoples Services Clinical Business Unit Email: askadirector-northcumbria@cntw.nhs.uk	
Services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and Adolescent Wards • Children and Young Peoples Eating Disorders Community Treatment Service 	Associate Directors Ferndene Prudhoe Northumberland NE42 5PB

What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website
www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints
- telephone the Complaints Department on 0191 245 6672
- email complaints@cntw.nhs.uk Please note that information sent to the Trust via email is sent at your own risk

We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice
- complete a Your Voice survey, available on wards, reception areas or from staff
- other options for sharing your feedback and experience www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns that you may have about any aspect of your or your loved one's care.

We act independently when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and, where appropriate, relevant organisations, to negotiate prompt solutions. If necessary, we can also refer patients and families to specific local or national-based support agencies.

North of Tyne

Telephone: 0800 032 0202

Email: pals@nhct.nhs.uk

Post: FREEPOST PALS

South of Tyne

Telephone: 0800 328 4397

Text: 07825 061 035

Email: pals@cntw.nhs.uk

Post: Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Garden Lodge,
Hopewood Park, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

9am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday

An answerphone is always available for you to leave a message. A member of the PALS team will aim to return your call as soon as possible.

Useful contacts

- **Independent advocacy**

A member of staff can provide you with contact details for advocacy services.



Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre on telephone 0191 246 7288.

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