*Specialty Name*

Salisbury District Hospital

Odstock Road

Salisbury

Wiltshire

SP2 8BJ

 Telephone 01722 345543

Date

Ref: [**Patient’s NHS number]**

**[Patient’s name]**

Address 1

Address 2

Address 3

Address 4

Postcode

**Private and confidential**

Dear [**Patient’s name]**

You are currently on the waiting list for a follow up appointment with the *specialty* department.

We are very sorry that your follow up review has been delayed and fully understand the frustration you may feel. The delay has been caused by the pressures on the NHS as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact this has had on all our services.

As you will appreciate we have never experienced anything like the pandemic before and the NHS has had to reorganise and transform outpatient services to manage social distancing and other patient safety measures. These changes and the build-up in demand all mean that waiting times are likely to be much longer than usual.

I would like to reassure you that to make certain that we are able to support all our patients at this time our doctors have been undertaking some review of those patients on our follow up waiting list to assess clinical priority. Clinicians have also assessed whether alternative treatments are available and might now be a better option given the current circumstances.

Following a discussion with your specialist team we would like to offer you a 6 month **patient initiated follow up** (PIFU). This means that should you require an appointment with a clinician at any time during this period, due to any changes in your condition or worsening of symptoms, you have the opportunity to contact the booking team to book an urgent telephone review. This allows us to make sure that priority is given to those people who need assessment and treatment most urgently at the time that they most need it.

However, we would like to be assured that this is appropriate for your current situation so please consider the following three options:

1. I have concerns about my current situation and would like to speak to my clinician by phone about how I am, my treatment, and what I would like to do next.
2. My symptoms are better and I am happy to be discharged.
3. My condition has not changed and I wish to continue on the 6 month patient initiated follow up pathway suggested.

If you would like us to arrange for you to speak to your doctor by phone or take you off the waiting list please contact our booking team on **01722 345543**.

If your condition has not changed, and you wish to continue on this 6 month patient initiated follow up pathway, **you do not need to contact us.** You will remain on the waiting list and be able to access an appointment should you require one during this time. Following this if you have not needed to access an appointment you will be discharged back to the ongoing care of your GP, who could then re-refer you, should you require further assessment and advice in the future.

Once again we are sorry for the delays and thank you for your understanding and patience in these difficult times.

Yours sincerely

*Specialty*Team