

An Introduction to the Dorset Prosthetic Centre

Who is this leaflet for?

This leaflet has been written to give patients and their relatives and carers some basic information regarding the Prosthetics Centre so that you know what to expect when you first attend and so that you know how to contact us again. Further information can be found on the website - www.uhd.nhs.uk/services/the-dorset-prosthetic-centre

Who is referred to the Dorset Prosthetic Centre?

Anyone of any age who has lost a limb or limbs can be referred to the centre. Some patients attend the clinic prior to having a limb amputated for advice and some patients attend after they have had surgery. Anyone can attend no matter where they live, but we regularly see and treat patients from Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. Patients usually attend for assessment for and provision of an artificial limb (prosthesis) but if you have an amputation and are unable or do not wish to have a prosthesis you can still attend the centre for advice and some treatments.

How can I be referred to the Centre?

Should you be reading this leaflet and have not yet been referred to the Centre and you have recently undergone an amputation, you will need an introductory letter from a Consultant or your General Practitioner or any health professional involved in your care. If the referral is not from your G.P. we will contact your surgery for your up to date medical history. If you are attending another NHS Prosthetic Centre and wish to transfer to this Centre, you can contact us to request this. However you will also need to contact your current centre to give them permission to send us a copy of your existing prosthetic record.

When is the Dorset Prosthetic Centre Open?

The Dorset Prosthetic Centre is open Monday - Friday 8.00 am to 4.30 pm. It is closed at weekends and on bank holidays.

How do I contact the Centre?

Please telephone: **0300 019 4363** during the opening hours detailed above.

Alternatively e-mail: prostheticscentre@uhd.nhs.uk and we will deal with your request and contact you during our opening hours.

How do I make an appointment?

Please contact the Centre on **0300 019 4363**. The Centre makes every effort to give patients an appointment at a time of their choice. Please notify us if you are unable to attend, as your appointment can then be given to another patient.

The Centre aims to see clients within 30 minutes of their appointment time (or time of arrival if later than appointment time). If this standard is not met the Centre staff will explain the reason why. Therefore clients with a planned appointment will be given priority over those clients who arrive for an emergency repair without an appointment and over those who arrive late for their booked appointment.

Adjustments and minor repairs can be carried out on the same day subject to the availability of components if required. Should major repairs be required, the prosthetist will endeavour to complete these within 25 days - this is dependent on the availability of any required parts.

We will keep you informed if there are any unforeseen delays.

Will transport be provided for my appointment?

Please see the attached leaflet on transport.

I am diabetic. Do I need to bring anything with me?

You may be at the centre longer than you anticipate so please bring your medication or tablets with you. Please also bring a snack in case it is required and/or money so that you can purchase food if needed.

What are the aims of the Centre?

- To provide a comprehensive quality service to all users of the Dorset Prosthetic Centre.
- To inform and involve the client and their relatives (carers) at all stages in the rehabilitation process.
- To offer pre-amputation advice and counselling whenever possible.
- To liaise with surgeons/GP's/other hospitals and community staff to ensure continuation of care.
- To regularly review the clients' requirements and offer a responsive service to meet their needs.

Which members of staff work at the Dorset Prosthetic Centre?

Consultant:

The Consultant sees all new amputees, as well as people who are considering amputation when they have a choice.

The Consultant is responsible for assessing medical fitness to proceed or continue with prosthetic limb wearing.

All users of the prosthetic centre can ask to see the Consultant whenever they need, e.g. for residual limb or phantom limb pain, skin problems or wound problems.

Clinical Specialist Nurse:

A specialist nurse is available to offer advice and practical help to users of the Centre. The nurse assesses and re-dresses wounds, completes diabetic reviews and offers advice on managing a healthy lifestyle.

Prosthetists:

A Prosthetist is the clinician whom you are likely to have the most contact with. They are trained to design and fit an artificial limb specific to each individual. They will assess your residual limb, overall fitness and prosthetic needs to design you a limb that will fit your everyday needs. It is important to have a good working relationship and communication with your prosthetist as you are likely to be involved with them long term. The more you work with your prosthetist, the better the outcome of your prosthesis.

Prosthetists are supported by technicians who make, repair and maintain your prosthetic limb(s).

Clinical Support Technician (CST):

The CST is a highly trained technician who is able to see you for any mechanical repairs and general maintenance of your prosthesis. The CST does not deal with issues of socket fit and will not change your prescription. However the CST may be able to make your socket more comfortable by adding some padding.

Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist:

A specialist physiotherapist is available to offer comprehensive assessments to new or established users. The physiotherapist can provide walking training to maximise your walking ability, assessment of musculoskeletal problems and offer advice on exercising, accessing leisure facilities and practical issues around the home and driving. The Physio can complete certain phantom pain treatments. In addition the physiotherapist also liaises closely with hospitals in the region undertaking treatment of amputees to ensure a consistently high quality service.

Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist:

A specialist Occupational Therapist (OT) is available to undertake comprehensive functional assessments for individuals who attend the Centre. The OT can offer advice on completing everyday activities/ tasks around the home, advice on washing and dressing, toileting and equipment and modifications to the home environment that promotes independence. The OT can also provide advice on accessing work, leisure activities and on driving. This applies whether you are a prosthetic user or not.

The OT is able to offer support, advice and practical strategies for coping to both new and established users of upper limb prosthesis, providing advice on the completion of activities/ tasks with and without the use of a prosthesis.

Children's Key Worker:

Either the Physiotherapist or the Occupational Therapist will act as the keyworker for any children that come to the centre and can support needs at nursery or school as well as with everyday activities and sports. They will endeavour to be at each prosthetic appointment so that the parent or guardian can discuss any problems that occur that may prevent your child from integrating into normal activities.

Support and Counselling Therapist:

The Counsellor is there to help you with the emotional and psychological adjustments that may be required before or after limb amputation. The Counsellor provides an opportunity for you to discuss your concerns, fears and feelings that you may have difficulty in expressing and will help you to deal with your emotions using talking therapies. If you would like to see her you can ask the staff, or ring her on **07833 058654** for an appointment. She does sometimes see people at home if necessary. She is also happy to see family members if they too are having trouble coming to terms with your limb loss.

Podiatrist:

The Podiatrist is concerned with the assessment and diagnosis and treatment of problems of the feet and will look at the toenails, skin condition, blood supply and bony structures of your foot. The aim is to promote good foot health and prevent additional problems in your remaining foot. They carry out screening for problems and undertake foot health education for patients at risk of developing complications owing to their underlying medical condition e.g. Diabetes. They will also treat any comparable problems that occur on your residual limb (stump) as this becomes a weight bearing surface once you are a prosthetic user and subject to similar problems as your foot - e.g. callous and corns.

Orthotist:

Orthotists are trained to assess, design and fit orthotic devices specific to the individual patients needs and condition. (They could include but are not limited to: be knee braces, insoles, calipers, and ankle braces). They will provide a range of "off the shelf" or custom made braces, splints and footwear to correct or maintain deformities, reduce pain, stabilise joints and aid movement. The Consultant or member of the clinical team will refer you to the Orthotist if there is the clinical need.

Administrative Staff:

The centre administration staff work to ensure the smooth running of the clinics and provide a prompt, responsive service. They will make an appointment for you and take and relay messages. They have experience of working in the centre with patients with limb loss and will be happy to talk to you to ensure that you see the appropriate professionals at each of your visits.

Who do the staff work for?

The consultant, nurse, therapists, podiatrists, counsellor and administration staff all work for the University Hospital Dorset NHS Foundation Trust.

You may notice that some staff members have a different logo on their uniform. This is because the Prosthetists, Clinical Support Technician, and Technicians work for a company that the trust has contracted with to make and supply the prosthetic limbs. This is because the company has a great deal of expertise in this field and they can provide the specialist training required on a nationwide basis.

The Trust employed staff and the contractor staff work as one team to ensure that you reach your optimum level of independence.

As an NHS patient attending our centre all the treatment is free.

Will it be helpful for me to talk to another patient who is in a similar situation?

It is often helpful to talk to someone who has been in a similar situation to you and to compare notes and learn from their experience. It is important that you talk to someone who has a similar medical history, has had their amputation for a similar reason and is on a similar rehabilitation pathway. The team will be pleased to find a suitable 'match' for you and our Counsellor will be able to set up the initial meeting. Please let a clinician know if you would like this to be arranged for you.

What other services/facilities are available at the Centre?

Information:

The Centre has a range of information leaflets located by the fitting rooms covering a wide range of topics.

Refreshments:

Hot drinks are available in the centre on request. You will need some change to purchase one. Sandwiches, snacks and meals can be purchased from the hospital restaurant situated close to the Centre.

Toileting:

There are accessible toilets with facilities for disabled people. Staff are available to help you with your personal needs, and to provide any assistance you require.

Baby changing facilities are also available.

Chaperone:

If you require a chaperone then please ask at the reception desk and someone would be pleased to assist you. Please state whether the chaperone needs to be male or female.

Language Interpreter:

An interpreter can be arranged to attend each of your appointments if English is not your first language. Please request this when you make your appointment. You will be encouraged to use an interpreter so that you receive the detailed information about prosthetic use and can put your views forwards to the staff. It is not always possible to have a family member with you throughout the whole process especially in single sex facilities.

Signing for the deaf:

A person to sign for you can be arranged on request.

Wheelchairs:

A loan wheelchair is available whilst attending the Centre if you require one. Please ask one of the therapy staff to select the wheelchair suitable to your individual requirements.

Children:

Within the waiting area is a children's play area. The children's fitting room has a variety of toys. As these areas are unsupervised, the Trust cannot be held responsible for the children's safety. Please therefore ensure children are supervised at all times.

Suggestions:

To maintain our service standard and wherever possible implement improvements, we would welcome your comments and/or suggestions. A suggestion box is provided and you can comment anonymously or include your name and address for a response.

Can I be more involved in the running of the Centre?

Yes. There is a User Group that patients can attend to hear about the running of the centre and contribute their ideas. Please contact the reception staff to express an interest in joining the group. The group meet 3 or 4 times a year at the hospital.

How do I make a complaint?

If you are not happy with the service that we provide, we would like to hear from you so that we can try to make improvements that will benefit everyone. In the first instance do speak to a member of staff to see if they can address your concerns.

If you are still concerned you can make an appointment with the reception desk to meet the manager **Mrs Rosemary Mead**.

Otherwise you can write to Rosemary at:

Dorset Prosthetic Centre
Royal Bournemouth Hospital
Castle Lane East
Bournemouth
Dorset.
BH7 7DW

Or contact by telephone on: **0300 019 4363**.

Alternatively you can write to:

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) to raise a concern. They will deal with the concerns that you have and will ask the centre to respond to those concerns.

Or you can write to the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service** at:

Royal Bournemouth Hospital
Castle Lane East
Bournemouth
Dorset. BH7 7DW

The Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Castle Lane East, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH7 7DW

Author: **Tim Randell** Date: **January 2022** Version: **Two** Review date: **January 2025** Ref: **532/21**

t: 01202 303626 w: www.uhd.nhs.uk : @UHD_NHS : @UHDTrust : @uhd_nhs