

Frailty Team

Recognising and understanding Frailty

During your inpatient stay, you have been seen by the Frailty team.

Who are we?

The Frailty team is an integrated multi-disciplinary team of:

- Geriatricians—Specialist doctors for older people
- Doctors
- Advanced Clinical Practitioners
- Clinical Nurse Specialists

The team work alongside other members of the hospital team involved in your care. They may see you in the Emergency Department (ED), Acute Assessment Unit (AAU) or Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC).

What is Frailty?

Frailty is a word used in healthcare that is often misunderstood. It is related to the ageing process; however younger people can also live with frailty.

It is recognised as a long-term condition, and it relates to your chances of recovery following health problems.

Frailty can cause:

- You to take longer to get over an illness or injury and have a long-term impact on your health and wellbeing.
- An illness or injury to be more serious for you.
- You to take longer to complete activities.

How might it affect me?

- Feeling slower
- Weakness and muscle loss
- Feeling tired
- Needing more help with daily tasks—like getting dressed
- Weight loss without trying
- Taking a long time to recover from illness.

Please let a professional in the hospital know if you have experienced any of the above prior to admission.

What are the common problems experienced with frailty?

- Falls—collapse, legs giving way
- Immobility—sudden change in mobility
- Delirium—new confusion / muddled (new or worsening)
- Incontinence—change in continence (new or worsening)
- Susceptible to side effects of medication

What can the team do about my frailty?

The team will try to find the best options for you by looking at you as a whole: what is important to you, all your health problems and all your medication.

We may refer you on to other professionals to help such as: Specialist Nurses, Advanced Practitioners, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Dieticians, Speech and Language Therapists and Social Workers.

What can I do whilst I am in hospital to help?

- Wear your own clothes during the day and appropriate slippers or shoes.
- Sit out of bed for periods of time, including meal times. Unless you are unable to do so, due to your medical condition.
- Participate in your own care, such as medication if possible with support from the nursing staff.
- Eat regular meals sat upright in the chair.
- Stay hydrated—unless you have been advised you are on a fluid restriction.
- Walk to the toilet or use the commode, if you are able or with support from the nursing team. Let us know if you normally need to use the toilet frequently or urgently.
- Let someone know if you normally use a walking aid.
- Let someone know if you are afraid of falling.
- Let someone know if you have any dizzy spells when standing and of any recent changes to your general health.
- Wear your glasses and hearing aids if you usually wear these at home.

Have I had a test or investigation for a frailty diagnosis?

No. There is not one test or investigation for frailty. The team may ask a few questions or ask you to demonstrate something when thinking about frailty.

You will be screened using a score called the 'Clinical Frailty Scale'. This score helps you to understand frailty, how you can help prevent and manage it.

A member of the team may also complete a 'Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment' to complete a full review of you as a whole.

What about the future?

We may want to talk to you about what you want to happen in the future if you were to get more unwell. It is good to think about this and discuss so that you can tell people what you want and have control of your future.

Please let the team know if you have already thought about this or have any formal documents, such as advanced care planning or resuscitation / CPR decisions.

What can I do about preventing frailty or improving my life if I live with frailty when I go home?

- Be active each day
- Exercise regularly
- Socialise with other people regularly
- Eat a balanced diet
- Stop smoking
- Reduce alcohol intake
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Keep your mind busy: learn new things / hobbies, volunteering, clubs, gardening, read books, solve puzzles etc.

Sources of information and support in community

The next few pages contain useful contact numbers for local support and services.

To access the complete online website version, please use the QR code:



Social Services

For packages of care / care queries:

- Suffolk Social Services 0808 800 4005 - Customer First is a 24 hour service.
- Cambridge Social Services 0345 045 5202
- Norfolk Social Services 0344 800 8020 / Option 1
- Essex Social Services 03457 430 430 / Option 2

Community Health Team

- Suffolk Community Health Care: 0300 123 2425
Care co-ordination centre (CCC) is a 24-hour service: This is the best contact for nurses / community therapists / bladder and bowel incontinence services
- Cambridge Community: 0844 931 0045
East Cambs / Option 3
- Norfolk Community Health Care: 01953 609409 / Option 1
- Suffolk wellbeing service: 01473 269110
Free support with mental health and emotional issues

Dementia Services

- Dementia Together: 08081 688 000
Practical information and support for people living with dementia regardless of a diagnosis.

- Alzheimer's Society: 0300 222 11 22
Support for people living with dementia.
- Dementia Intensive Support Team (DIST): 01284 733260
Admission prevention support for people living with dementia.
- Shaftesbury Group: 01449 700733
Suffolk Memory and Dementia Support- for people with memory concerns and dementia and for those caring for family or friends in Suffolk.
- Dementia UK: 0800 888 6678
Specialist dementia nursing charity providing support and advice via Admiral Nurses.

Suffolk Family Carers: 01473 835 477

Supports family carers - advice and support.

Norfolk Carers Support: 0808 808 9876

Our Special Friends: 01284 247077

Charity providing animal companionship visits and support in caring for pets in Suffolk.

Fire Home Safety Visit

www.safelincs.co.uk/hfsc/

Home from Hospital

Short term practical support and advice—e.g. housework / cleaning / shopping / befriending.

- ACT Supported Discharge Service
East Suffolk: 01473 527437
West Suffolk: 01473 527438
- Help at Home (City and South & East Cambs): 01223 714433
- Red Cross (Norfolk): 01603 288320
Support at Home.

- Age UK Services – Home: 0800 169 6565
Home Help, Befriending.

Abbeycroft Active Living

Exercise on referral—Consult your GP/clinician for a referral

Numbers for local Active Living teams:

Bury St Edmunds	01284 757481
Brandon	01638 782520
Mildenhall	01638 782520
Hadleigh	01284 757487
Haverhill	01440 765156
Sudbury	01440 765156
Newmarket	01638 782507

Social prescribers/Community matron

Accessed through local health, voluntary organisations and social care teams or your local GP surgery.

Transport in community

- Non-emergency EZEC for hospital appointments
0300 999 6666
- Connecting Communities 0345 606 6171
Rural Transport for those that cannot drive or access public transport

Medication queries:

Please liaise with your local GP surgery or pharmacy.

Medical concerns or further advice:

If you have any medical concerns, contact your GP or NHS 111 if you need urgent medical help when your GP surgery is closed or you are not sure what to do. In an emergency call 999.

Feedback

In order to help us develop our service, we would welcome any comments on your experience of being seen by the Frailty team. Please use the QR code or we can

provide you with a paper questionnaire to complete.



Concerns and queries

In the first instance please talk to a member of the ward staff providing your care or the ward manager. You can also contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for support.

Telephone: 01284 712555 with 24-hour answerphone facility.

Clinical research

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk. This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

Accessibility

If you require this leaflet in a different format, please contact the patient advice and liaison service on 01284 712555 or email PALS@wsh.nhs.uk

If you would like any information regarding access to our Trust services and facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble: <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>



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