



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Rapid access clinic for older people (RACOP)

The RACOP provides a comprehensive health assessment for any patient with frailty or complex needs. This leaflet answers common questions asked related to the clinic.

**Patient information**

## What is the RACOP (Rapid Access Clinic for the Older Person)?

The RACOP provides a comprehensive health assessment for any patient with frailty or complex needs. Even though it is called a clinic for the older person, people of any age can be seen here. You may be sent to the clinic from your GP, community services, another team in the hospital, or A&E.

The aim of this clinic is to give you a thorough check-up during one long visit to the hospital, rather than asking you to return to the hospital many times for lots of short appointments.

The RACOP team will be able to look at all of your needs together when they are deciding on the best course of treatment and care for you. They may look at your mobility (how well you can move around) and how you cope at home as well as your medical condition(s).

## When will I be seen at the RACOP?

After you have been referred, you will receive a letter stating when your appointment is. This can take up to two weeks. If you don't hear anything in two weeks, please call the number at the bottom of this page.

## What happens when I get to the RACOP?

- To start with, you will be seen by one of our nurses who will take your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, weight and check your oxygen and blood sugar levels.
- You may also have some blood tests, if they are needed by the doctor.

- You may also have a 'heart trace' (electrocardiogram or ECG). If this happens, we will attach several pads to your chest, arms and legs so that we can see how well your heart is working electrically.
- The doctor will then see you. The doctor may then decide that you need other tests. These could include an x-ray, CT scan, ultrasound or echocardiogram (a test that sees how well the blood flows through your heart). We will try and arrange these on the same day, but can't always promise this.
- Because RACOP is a teaching clinic, you may be asked if a medical student, student nurse or a community nurse can sit in on your appointment. If you don't want this, you can say no. Sometimes we ask you to give us feedback about your doctor. You do not have to do this.
- At the end of your appointment, we hope to have a much clearer idea of what is troubling you and what your condition may be so we can put a plan of action in place.

## Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, you can bring anyone into the clinic with you. Please contact us in advance if you want them to travel with you as we cannot always arrange this. If you need further advice about travelling to your RACOP appointment, please contact the number below.

## How long will I spend at the RACOP?

You should come prepared to spend most of the day at the clinic. Once you arrive at the RACOP, you will be greeted by a member of staff, booked in and guided to a seating area to wait for your appointment. The appointment with the doctor can take up to an hour.

## What should I bring with me?

We will supply light refreshments, for example tea, coffee, biscuits and sandwiches but you may want to bring your own food and drink. You may want to bring something to do, like a book, magazine, iPad or tablet.

Please bring your medications with you as we may need to make changes to them. You may also need some of your medication during the day, especially painkillers, insulin or any other essential medicine.

## What happens next?

This depends on what we find out during your appointment.

### **The options are:**

- You can go home. Before you go, we will tell you about the tests we did and what our first findings were. We will tell your GP about our findings and tell your pharmacy if any changes need to be made to your medication. Sometimes the doctor can follow up your test results by letter but we will let you know this when you are seen.
- You have a short stay in hospital. The aim of this clinic is to prevent you from being admitted to hospital unless this is absolutely necessary. However, it may be that the team at the clinic decide that a short stay in hospital, for more investigations and treatment, is the best thing for you. We will always discuss this fully with you first. If you do need to stay in hospital, then you will usually be admitted straight to a ward from the clinic.

- You have follow-up appointments. You may need to come back to a clinic to see another specialist team or come back to us for another appointment. We will let you know if you need to do this, and we will write to you to give you the details of any other appointments that you need to attend.

## Where to find us

The RACOP clinic is based at the Royal Sussex County Hospital, Louisa Martindale Building, on ward C8. When entering the building, the main reception will be able to assist you with directions.

If you are making your own way to the clinic, there are a small number of pick up/drop off bays located inside the entrance to the multi-storey car park, there is a 20 minute grace period for people using these bays after which charges will apply.

A car park is situated under the Louisa Martindale Building, and is access via Bristol Gate by taking the first left. The multi-storey car park is situated on the North Access Road which is accessed via Bristol Gate, Third Entry on the left (immediately after A&E).

# Who can I contact for further information and advice?

**RACOP: Royal Sussex County Hospital**

**Phone 01273 523045**

**Opening Hours 8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

**RACOP: Princess Royal Hospital**

**Phone 01444 448745**

**Opening Hours 8:30 am to 3:00 pm**

## **Be Advised**

Clinic times and locations may change, please see [uhsussex.nhs.uk](https://uhsussex.nhs.uk) or call our switchboard for further information if you are not able to contact the clinic.

# Where can I get general support and information?

For general medical advice please use the NHS website, the NHS 111 service, walk-in centres, or your GP:

- The NHS website provides online health information and guidance.
- NHS 111 phone line offers medical help and advice from trained advisers supported by nurses and paramedics. Available 24 hours a day. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.
- There are walk-in and urgent treatment services at Brighton Station, in Crawley and at Lewes Victoria Hospital. Find Walk-in centre services – NHS.
- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can be contacted with your comments and concerns, and to provide general support. See below:

## PALS

**Royal Sussex County Hospital**    **01273 664511**

**Princess Royal Hospital**            **01444 448678**

**Email:** [uhsussex.pals@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.pals@nhs.net)

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