



# The Lawson Unit

The Lawson Unit is a specialist centre offering treatment, support and ongoing care for people living with HIV.

The Lawson Unit is the leading centre for HIV care on the south coast, and one of the largest in the UK. We have an international reputation for clinical care and research.

## Contact details and opening times

Lawson Unit @ A6 Outpatients, Louisa Martindale Building,  
Royal Sussex County Hospital, Eastern Road, Brighton, BN2 5BE  
Telephone **01273 664722** [www.brightonsexualhealth.com](http://www.brightonsexualhealth.com)

Monday	7:30am	-	5pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Tuesday	7:30am	-	5pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Wednesday	2:00pm	-	5pm	
Thursday	7:30am	-	5pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)
Friday	7:30am	-	5pm	(Closed 1pm - 2pm)

We offer a women's only clinic, called the Sunflower clinic which runs every other Friday Morning (9:30-1:00pm) appointment by referral

For HIV related out of hours queries -  
Please contact B6 ward **01273 667916**

## Patient information

## **Appointments details**

### **Routine appointments**

Routine appointments for blood tests take approximately 20 minutes. Additionally, routine appointments with your doctor or nurse specialist will take around 20 minutes. These appointments can be face-to-face or by telephone/video calls.

### **Annual health checks**

We also provide an annual health check where we will discuss and assess aspects of your physical and psychological health. This appointment takes approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour but some of the assessments can be done at routine appointments.

### **Sexual health screening**

All patients are offered sexual health screening. This can include review of vaccinations, contraception review and cervical smears. We offer self-collected swabs for people without any symptoms of an infection. This can be done as part of your routine appointments and will be explained to you before you use them.

### **Patients transferring their care**

You will be seen by a senior nurse prior to your appointment with a doctor. Please allow a little extra time as it is important that we can spend some time with you discussing your previous care and current health. This can take 45 minutes.

**If you have difficulties attending your appointments please talk to a member of staff**

### **How often will I need to come to the clinic?**

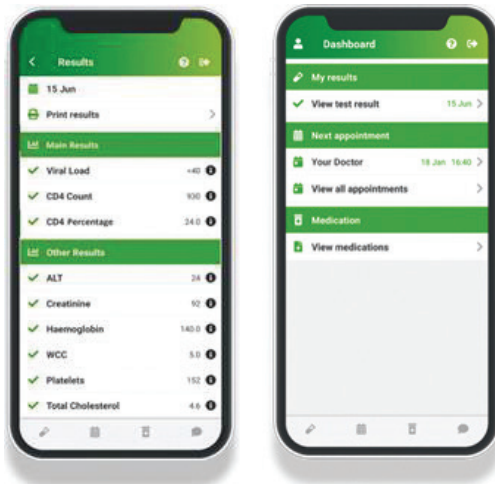
Initially you may need to be seen more frequently, but more stable patients may only need to be seen every six months to a year. Blood tests should be arranged at least two weeks before your appointment with the doctor/specialist nurse so they can discuss these results with you.

## CONNECT

CONNECT offers a digital health pathway which can reduce the number of consultations with your doctor/special nurse to a single appointment annually. Blood tests are still recommended every 6 months. On the visit where blood tests are taken (but no doctor/special nurse appointment), your test results will be checked by a team of doctors virtually and results will be emailed to you directly. Prescriptions will be generated remotely and medications can be posted or sent to pharmacy for you to collect.

## EmERGE

EmERGE is our newest digital health innovation which works on the same principles as CONNECT by reducing the number of necessary consultations to a single appointment annually. However, instead of results being communicated to you via email, you will have access to a highly secure mobile app. The app connects to your HIV health record and provides you with instant access to results (both current and historic). Additionally, the app contains information about your medications, future appointments dates, and a two-way messaging system which allows you to communicate directly with the Lawson Unit.



# Can I take part in research?

Thanks to patients' willingness to be involved in studies, research has played an important role in progressing and improving care and quality of life for people living with HIV.

We believe everybody should have the opportunity to volunteer to take part and benefit from research and continue to help answer the big questions we still have.



Types of studies we do include new drug treatments, ageing, other conditions including covid-19, hepatitis C, diabetes, kidney and liver health, sexual health and contraception and HIV prevention.

If you are thought to be suitable for a study this will be discussed with you by one of the team or you can approach us directly to find out what is currently available.

You can contact the Research Team on **01273 523079**  
or [UHSussex.EJCresearch@nhs.net](mailto:UHSussex.EJCresearch@nhs.net)

# What is the HIV Pharmacy?

## The HIV specialist pharmacy team is based in the Lawson Unit:

- We see all patients who start or switch antiretrovirals (ARVs)
- We can answer any questions and provide advice and support regarding your medicines
- We review all Lawson unit prescriptions before they can be dispensed.

**Contact the pharmacy team on 01273 664948  
during Lawson Unit opening hours,  
or email [uhsussex.pharmacy.seh@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.pharmacy.seh@nhs.net)**

Once your prescription has been screened at the Lawson unit please take it to Pharm@Sea, which is the outpatient pharmacy for the Hospital.

**If you have a question about a prescription given to Pharm@Sea, or you would like them to deliver your medication, you can contact them on 01273 523257 or email [uhsussex.pharm.sea@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.pharm.sea@nhs.net)**

**You will need to tell them your clinic number.**

It is important to tell us about all other medication you take (including inhalers and multivitamins) so we can check for potential serious interactions with your HIV medication.

## **Medicines home delivery (from Alcura Health)**

Please discuss with your doctor and pharmacist if you would like your HIV medicines delivered to your home (or any UK) address. If you need to contact Alcura for issues regarding your delivery, please ring **0800 9800686** or **01604 433500**.

## How do I get more medication?

Please make a note of how many tablets you have at home before coming to each appointment. You will be given a prescription by your doctor to last until your next visit. If you realise you are running low and don't have enough until you see your doctor, please contact the Lawson unit pharmacy team on the number above, allowing at least 24 hours for your prescription to be written.

## What do I do if I'm unwell?

- We offer a telephone triage system in the Lawson unit during opening hours.
- Triage is a way to assess and direct you to the most appropriate treatment or centre.
- If you feel unwell or are concerned you may have an HIV related issue, phone the clinic and one of our reception staff will take your details and arrange for one of the nurses to contact you and discuss your concerns, and advise you of the most appropriate action.
- If not within Lawson unit opening times out-of-hours queries should be directed to B6 ward (HIV inpatients unit) on **01273 667916**.
- Your GP will still provide all medical care which not related to HIV.

## Does my GP need to know my HIV status?

- We encourage all of our patients to register with a GP.
- With your permission we will regularly communicate with your GP advising of any changes in your HIV care.
- Many patients have problems unrelated to HIV which GPs can manage safely.

## Do you have links to other services?

We have excellent links with other departments including oncology, hepatitis clinics, rheumatology, dietetics, chest medicine and antenatal services, and we have many also have joint clinics with other specialties.

We have pathways in place that will help with any other treatments or appointments you may need from other specialties. We also work closely with other organisations such as THT (Terrence Higgins Trust), HIV community support team, MHRRS (Mental Health Rapid response Service) along with various Drug and Alcohol services.

### Useful Web links

[www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)

[www.hivaware.org.uk](http://www.hivaware.org.uk)

[www.i-base.info](http://www.i-base.info)

[www.nat.org.uk](http://www.nat.org.uk)

[www.lifewithhiv.org.uk](http://www.lifewithhiv.org.uk)

[www.positivelyuk.org](http://www.positivelyuk.org)

[www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)

### HIV support services in Brighton & Hove

**Sussex Beacon** ([www.sussexbeacon.org.uk](http://www.sussexbeacon.org.uk))

**Terrence Higgins Trust** ([www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk))

**Lunch Positive** ([www.lunchpositive.org](http://www.lunchpositive.org))

### Local LGBTQ+ mental health support

[www.switchboard.org.uk](http://www.switchboard.org.uk)

[www.mindout.org.uk](http://www.mindout.org.uk)

**Clinic number**

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**Health adviser**

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**Nurse**

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**Doctor/Specialist nurse**

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**Next appointment dates:**

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**Health advisers: 01273 664716**

**Nurses: 01273 664722 opt 2**

**B6 ward: 01273 667916**

**If you have a special requirement (for example, related beliefs or an allergy/disability) please contact the reception team on 01273 664722**

**If you have vision, mobility or access issues please contact the reception team on 01273 664722 for further advice / information.**

**This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath**

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