

OVERVIEW OF NHS SERVICE CHANGES FOR THE OVER 65's FACTSHEET

As you get older the NHS changes the services it provides for you, in order to better meet your changing health needs as you age. This is particularly the case after the age of 65. You will notice that new NHS clinics will be open to you, the UK wide national screening programmes will change and you will be offered new immunisations.

Q What new clinics might be available to me now I'm over 65?

A As you get older you may find that you will be referred to specialist clinics that are designed to deal with the most common issues affecting older people. They often have an inclusive approach which means that there are a range of health and social care professionals working within them. The services may vary depending on where you live and there may be a slight difference in the age criteria for referral. Your GP would normally need to make a referral for these clinics. The most common clinics available are:

Falls Clinics

The age criteria for Falls Clinics varies, but as the likelihood of falls increases as you age, they are generally designed for older people. The usual age criteria is 65 but this can be flexible if you have other health problems. You can discuss with your GP what is available locally.

If you fall a lot, attending a Falls Clinic may be helpful. The doctors there will be able to investigate and treat lots of different causes of falling. The clinics are usually run by a team of doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. This means that you should have input from a number of experts working as a team.

Memory Clinics

Memory Clinics are designed for people over 65 with concerns about their memory. Your GP will refer you if you have concerns.

A memory clinic team may include doctors, psychologists, specialist nurses and Occupational Therapists as well as support workers for you and your family.

Day Assessment Units

A day assessment unit provides the care, treatment and tests a patient needs without having to stay overnight in hospital.

Following a referral from their GP, patients are given an appointment to attend, and they will spend several hours there. This might involve seeing doctors, nurses and physiotherapists, as well as having blood tests, ECGs or scans. At the end of the day, patients go home with a management plan and sometimes a review appointment. The idea is to investigate and treat a medical problem in a 'one-stop shop'. This is usually faster than having the tests done through your GP and is more convenient than staying overnight in hospital.

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Care of the Elderly Clinics

Care of the Elderly clinics provide inclusive care for older people. The age criteria of care of the elderly clinics vary around the country, but they usually start between 65 and 70 years of age.

Doctors working in care of the elderly clinics specialise in looking after older people. They are experts in managing patients with multiple and complicated health needs. The clinics usually have a pragmatic approach that focuses on the individual, so can be more flexible in the care they provide to you.

Q What new vaccinations will I be offered?

- A There are a number of important vaccinations that are available to all adults on the NHS once you hit the age of 65.

Shingles Vaccine

For all adults aged over 65 - the Shingles vaccine protects against the risk of catching Shingles which is a painful common condition that can make you seriously ill

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/shingles-vaccination

Pneumococcal Vaccine

For all adults over 65 - The pneumococcal vaccine protects against some types of pneumonia and meningitis. It is recommended for those at high risk of these illnesses and all adults over 65.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/pneumococcal-vaccination

Influenza Vaccine and Covid Vaccination

During winter 2023/2024 The flu and Covid vaccinations were offered on the NHS to adults who are 65 and over. However, the rules change from year-to-year, so for up to date guidance, please check

www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/flu-vaccine/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination/getting-a-covid-19-vaccine

Q What happens to health screening after the age of 65?

- A There are changes to health screening tests as you age. Some start and others become less important. Screening is designed to catch disease at an early stage when it is more treatable - even when there are no symptoms that you have noticed - so it is important that you respond to invitations to attend routine screening. If you have concerns, don't wait for a screening appointment, go and see your GP!

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STARTS

Lung Cancer

After successful local pilots, patients aged 55-74 whose GP notes show a record of smoking history will be invited for both a lung CT scan and to smoking cessation services. This is currently being rolled out and is not available across the whole of the UK yet. www.gov.uk/government/news/new-lung-cancer-screening-roll-out-to-detect-cancer-sooner

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is a bulge or swelling in the aorta, the main blood vessel that runs from your heart down through your tummy. An AAA will often cause no symptoms; but if it's not spotted early, it could get bigger and eventually burst causing life-threatening bleeding in your tummy. The screening is a simple painless and quick ultrasound of your tummy.

Because men aged 65 or over are most at risk of getting AAAs, all four UK countries offer men AAA screening during the year they turn 65. If you're male and registered with a GP, you'll get an invitation by post when you're 64, or soon after your 65th birthday. This screening test is not available to women as they are lower risk.

CONTINUES

Bowel Cancer

NHS bowel cancer screening CONTINUES to age 74 years. www.nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening

Breast Cancer

CONTINUES every 3 years until you are 71.

STOPS

Cervical Cancer

Cervical smear tests for women STOP after the age of 64, unless you have had abnormal smear tests screenings, in which case they may continue.

Q Where can I find out more?

A To find out more, please call the Health and Wellbeing team on 01480 474074 or email us at hello@thalidomidetrust.org