

Patient question sheet



Inspiring Change

A review of the quality of care provided to patients receiving acute non-invasive ventilation

Questions for patients/relatives/carers to ask when someone is having acute non-invasive ventilation (NIV)

Question: Do you understand what is happening and what acute non-invasive ventilation is?

Suggestion: If not, ask if a consultant or senior member of the respiratory team is available to explain to you what is happening.

Question: Do you know who is in charge of your/your relative's care?

Suggestion: Ask to know the name of the consultant in charge and their specialty. This should be acute medicine, respiratory medicine or intensive care medicine.

Question: Do you understand what treatment is planned? including what will happen, how it will happen, why it will happen, when it will happen and what is expected to happen afterwards?

Suggestion: If not, ask the doctor or nurse treating you to explain it again. It may be a good idea to make some notes.

Question: Have you been told that non-invasive ventilation is not always effective?

Suggestion: If not, you may want to discuss with the doctors what will happen if it does not help to resolve your/your relative's problem?

Question: Does the mask fit comfortably? Is it causing any pain, can air be felt blowing around the eyes or are there any rasping noises around the sides?

Suggestion: If it is not fitting well or gas is leaking ask a doctor or nurse for this to be looked at.

Question: Do you feel confident that the person working the machine knows how to use it?

Suggestion: If not, ask to see the specialist consultant on-call.

Question: Are your/your relative's oxygen levels being recorded continuously?

Suggestion: If not ask why not. You may also want to ask what the level should be so you can be aware if it is too high or too low.

Question: Are your/your relative's pulse, blood pressure and breathing rate being recorded regularly and are the settings on the ventilator being checked regularly too?

(‘Regularly’ means at least once per hour for the first few hours of treatment)

Suggestion: If not, ask whether the frequency is appropriate.

Questions for patients/relatives/carers to ask when someone has had acute non-invasive ventilation (NIV)

Question: At the point of being discharged from hospital, has a follow-up appointment been arranged with a specialist in your/your relative's condition?

Suggestion: If not, speak to a doctor or nurse to ask for this to be arranged.

Suggestion: If it has, are you clear about the arrangements? If not ask the doctor or nurse to explain again and ask them to write the details down.

Question: Have you considered what you would like to happen in the future if you/your relative has a similar illness?

Suggestion: If so, discuss your future wishes with the staff caring for you and aim to get a plan in writing for your notes, your GP and a copy for you/your relative.

Question: Do you know if your GP has been informed of your hospital stay and follow-up arrangements

Suggestion: You may want to ask for a copy of the discharge letter so you can hand it to the GP.

Useful links:

[British Thoracic Society: www.brit-thoracic.org.uk](http://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk)

[British Lung Foundation: www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk)