

Monday 5th January 2026

Dear GP colleagues,

New shortness of breath service operating at Willesden and Ealing Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs)

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and London North West NHS Trust are now accepting GP referrals for the shortness of breath service operating at Willesden Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) and Ealing Community Diagnostic Centre (at Ealing Hospital site).

Purpose

This one-stop diagnostic pathway is for patients who have **breathlessness with no clear cardiac or respiratory cause found on clinical assessment and initial investigations**. It aims to improve the patient journey by providing an integrated respiratory and cardiac diagnostic work up one stop clinic with consultant support.

Who to refer?

The service is for people who have:

- Ongoing breathlessness with unclear cause i.e. no asthma, COPD, heart failure based on clinical assessment

AND

- Normal CXR, Hb and NT-BNP prior to referral

Please note if there is clinical suspicion of asthma or COPD please refer for spirometry and FeNO by using the Respiratory Diagnostic Hub (RDH) or CDC Diagnostics service.

Referral Process

- Referrals will be made directly via eRS using the referral forms provided
- The referral form will be available on SystmOne and EMIS and located as:

Willesden: Speciality – Respiratory; Clinic Type: Not otherwise specified; Service Name: Respiratory/Cardiac |One Stop Shortness of Breath Service TRIAGE | Willesden| Imperial NHS Trust|

OR

Ealing: Speciality – Diagnostic Physiological Measurement; Clinic Type: Type: Respiratory - Full Lung Function; Service Name: Ealing Hospital: Adult Breathlessness Service – Ealing CDC

Please note, should referrals not meet the criteria for the service, advice and guidance will be given or if deemed appropriate, the patient may be referred to either a respiratory or cardiac service.

Breathlessness Service Administration:

Once the triaged referral has been received, the team administrator will contact the patient within 24 hours to confirm they are willing to the appropriate CDC (Willesden or Ealing) for the diagnostic tests.

Following confirmation, the patient will receive a confirmation text message for the appointment date/time, location of diagnostics and a detailed appointment letter explaining what will be involved on the day.

The tests are all booked for the same day and the patient is scheduled for the next available MDT, where the findings of the diagnostics are reviewed, and an outcome plan put in place with a letter sent to the GP and patient confirming next steps.

What will happen in the clinic:

Appointments will be available Monday to Friday in the morning. Patients will be required to attend clinic for up to 2 hours to ensure all diagnostics are completed on the same day.

The following diagnostic tests will be available in clinic:

- Echocardiogram
- ECG
- Full Lung Function (spirometry, reversibility testing, FeNO, lung volumes and gas transfer)

All tests results will be reviewed weekly by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) chaired by a respiratory consultant with cardiac consultant support. Patients will either be:

- Discharged to primary care with a care plan for referrer to follow up
or
- Given a further diagnostic test +/- specialist review in secondary care thereafter
or
- Given an appointment in secondary care or with the community respiratory services for respiratory or cardiology

This service will be by clinical referral only, underpinned by our service referral criteria, which is attached.

Service response time

All referrals will be reviewed by a consultant within 24 hours.

Routine referrals:

All accepted routine referrals will be offered an appointment within 20 days.

Urgent referrals:

Patients who require urgent care should not be sent to this service.

For all enquiries, please contact the dedicated Shortness of Breath administration team:

Willesden CDC (Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust)

- Tel: 0203 312 5767
- Email: imperial.sobpathway@nhs.net

Ealing CDC (London North West University NHS Trust)

- Tel: 0208 967 5571
- Email: Lnwh-tr.ecdclungfunction@nhs.net

Kind regards,

Ellie Worthington,

GP Clinical Lead Respiratory Medicine and Post Covid NWL ICB