

**For Further Details**

To find out more about the course or to book a place on the next available one, please contact:

**Write to – Rheumatology Conferences/ Education Programmes**

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**Information we hold about you and your rights under the Data Protection Act**

Please refer to the booklet ‘Your Healthcare Information – Your Rights! Our Responsibilities!’ for further guidance.

**How to comment on your treatment**

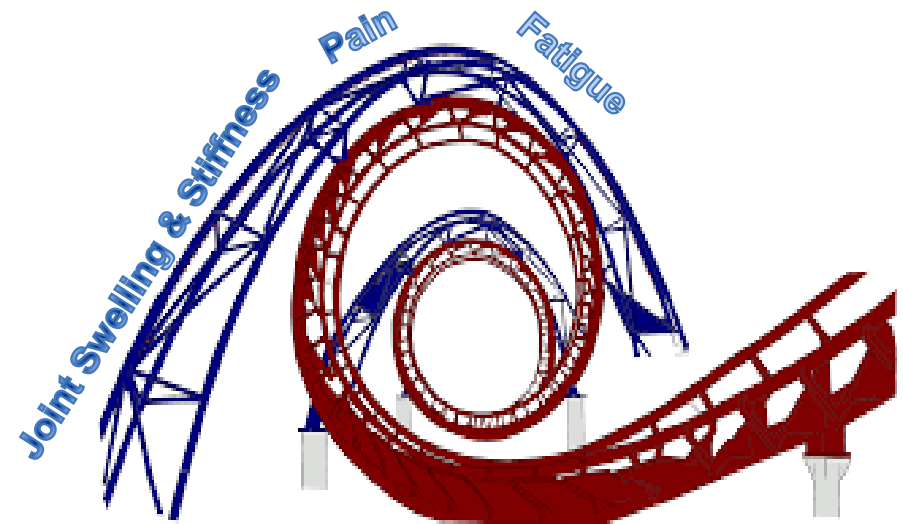
We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer your questions. However, if you have any concerns you can also contact the Patient Experience Service on 0800 917 6039 or E-mail: PHT.pals@porthosp.nhs.uk

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# Department of Rheumatology

## Flare Rollercoaster

## Patient / family/ carer's work Shop



An arthritis and connective tissue disease “flare” is technically defined as an episode of increased disease activity or worsening arthritis/ connective tissue disease symptoms.

Most people with arthritis/ connective tissue diseases typically realise they are in a flare when certain changes occur. There is usually intense pain which may be described as constant or persistent. Other symptoms may increase such as fatigue, malaise, or fever.

Joint pain, stiffness and swelling may or may not be included among the increased symptoms which are associated with a flare.

With regard to fatigue, people usually describe the fatigue that is associated with a flare as severe and intense compared to what they typically experience. It is often described as feeling wiped out or having no energy or strength. Even after a period of sleep, the person having a flare still feels unrefreshed.

It makes you feel physically worse; it disrupts your routine and ability to function normally; it is disruptive to sleep—and then emotions get involved.

If the flare is particularly intense, becomes disruptive, and feels uncontrollable despite self-management, that's when most people consult their rheumatology team.

The **“Flare Rollercoaster”** Workshop has a mix of presentations and interactive sessions and has been designed to help people living with arthritis and connective tissue diseases understand the wider impact that a flare can

have, and to equip them with the tools they need to make positive changes in their lives to tackle a flare when it occurs

The aim of the workshop is that people with Arthritis and Connective Tissue Diseases can enjoy a good quality of life, in spite of being at risk of flares at “work, rest and play”.

The workshop is presented by members of the Rheumatology team who are experts in the management of flares associated to arthritis and connective tissue diseases

#### **Q - Who is the programme designed for?**

“Flare Rollercoaster” work shop has been specifically designed to target those patients attending Rheumatology clinics who are affected by long term arthritis and connective tissue diseases.

#### **Q - To attend the programme does it matter what type of arthritis/connective tissue disease I have?**

The programme is open to anyone regardless of their arthritis or connective tissue disease.

#### **Q - What is covered during the programme?**

During the programme you will be able to discuss and understand the non-medical management of flares, especially focusing on self-management/ flare management topics. Each topic is delivered in a way that makes it possible for individuals to interact and contribute and make sense of flare management.

**Q- What does self-management mean?**

Self-management means **you** being back in control, not the pain controlling you. The ideas on offer are about becoming a person again rather than a patient.

**Q- What to expect when attending the “Flare Rollercoaster” workshop. What you will find when you walk through the door:-**

People in the same position you are- living with arthritis and connective tissue diseases.

**During the 3 ½ hr session you will cover/ learn about –**

- \* Possible causes of a flare
  
- \* Being prepared for flares at work, rest and play
  
- \* Self-Management of a flare - 1<sup>st</sup> steps- Learning how to manage your flare, by developing your own flare management tool kit
  
- \* What to do if flare doesn't settle- next steps
  
- \* An opportunity to meet others living with arthritis and connective tissue diseases and to share experiences and strategies.

**Q- Do I need to be referred in to attend?**

To find out more about the course or to book a place on a course that is starting soon, please contact the Rheumatology Department through the address details on the back of this brochure.

Details of when courses are starting will be posted within the department and on our webpage on the Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust website.

<http://www.porthosp.nhs.uk/departments/Rheumatology/rheumatology.htm>

We also work with our charity and community partners to try to keep people informed about the support and help available

