The Plastic Dressing Clinic (PDC) is run by nurses and supports the plastic surgery service. We cover a population of 3.5 million people and patients travel long distances to see us. You may have been given an appointment after an operation or having been seen by a plastic surgeon. The PDC has limited support from the surgeons and physiotherapists. However, you may sometimes see your consultant if he/she is in clinic that day.

If you have had surgery in the hospital you will have been given a PDC appointment or asked to telephone for one. It is important that you have your discharge sheet with you when you phone as we will need your hospital number and clinical information from you in order to make an appropriate appointment. It is important that you keep this appointment as we need to see that you are progressing and have not developed any complications.

Please arrive on time for your appointment as the clinic is often very booked up and arriving late may mean that we are unable to see you as there are other patients who are booked in at regular intervals. Please report to the reception desk on arrival. Depending upon your condition your stay with us might be some time, for example, after being seen by the nurse you may need to be seen by a doctor and the physiotherapist. This might be the case with patients seen before you so there may be an unavoidable wait. You need to consider this when arranging your transport.

We will arrange any additional follow-up at this clinic, including care by a community nurse if necessary.

Is there anything I should look out for?

When you have left hospital you should keep an eye on your wound for any signs of infection.

These include:

- increasingly painful inflammation (swelling) around the wound
- increasing redness around your wound
- a fluctuation or increase in your body temperature
- an offensive smell from the wound
- swelling and a gradual loss of movement
- a general feeling of being unwell.
If you are concerned that you might have an infection please contact the hospital as we may need to see you earlier than planned. Please do not come to the hospital without telephoning first as we need to prepare for your visit.

There are several things you can do to encourage healing, including:

- keeping the dressing clean and dry
- if you have a splint on your hand it is important not to remove it. If it feels too tight or loose then please contact the hospital.
- if you have a hand-related condition keep your hand elevated at all times above the level of your heart. If you have been given a Bradford Sling please use it. The use of other slings is discouraged as they put pressure on your neck and strain on your shoulder. Elevating your hand helps reduce swelling and ensures a good blood supply thus promoting good healing.
- if you smoke it is important to stop if you are to heal well. Whilst in hospital you can ask to be referred to the smoking cessation service or contact your GP who will be able to help you.

If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact the hospital on 01722 336262 Plastic Outpatients ext. 3254 (8 am - 5 pm Monday - Friday) or Laverstock Ward ext. 4352 outside these hours.