



**BTS/ACPRC Guideline**  
**Physiotherapy management of the adult, medical, spontaneously breathing patient**  
**Web Appendix 10 – Action Plan for a Person with Neuromuscular disease**

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Vital Capacity \_\_\_\_\_ Date achieved \_\_\_\_\_

Best cough Peak Flow \_\_\_\_\_ Date achieved \_\_\_\_\_

**Key to terms used in this action plan**

**MI-E:** Mechanical in-exsufflator -the cough-assist machine

**MIC:** Maximal insufflation capacity - the biggest breath you can hold

**Breath stacking:** Adding breaths together, by holding your breath in between breaths, until your lungs are full

**PCF:** Peak cough flow - the fastest cough you can do when you cough into the peak flow meter

**SpO<sub>2</sub>:** Arterial oxygen saturation (levels) measured with a finger probe

**Frog Breathing:** A method of taking air into the lungs by using the tongue to gulp air

**NIV:** Non-invasive ventilation

**If you have an effective cough and no signs of a chest infection**

If the following describes you	Your action is
<p>You are able to work, play or function as usual</p> <p>You do not have any of the symptoms in the next section</p> <p>PCF more than 270L/min</p> <p>and/or</p> <p>SpO<sub>2</sub> on air more than 95%</p>	<p>Continue your MIC exercises as prescribed:</p> <p>Breath stacking <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Single breath MIC <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Monitor your PCF routinely</p> <p>Continue to use methods needed to achieve PCF above 270L/min when you are well</p> <p>Manually assisted coughing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>MI-E <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Frog Breathing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NIV <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Bag assisted breaths <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Discuss with your doctor the possibility of keeping a supply of antibiotics at home.</p>

**If your symptoms are troublesome and getting worse**

If the following describes you	Your action is
<p>You start to feel unwell with cold or cough or notice a change in your cough</p> <p>You are producing phlegm which is difficult to clear</p> <p>You notice any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• you are having difficulty swallowing</li> <li>• You are more breathless on activity or lying flat</li> <li>• You are waking with headaches in the morning</li> <li>• You feel tired during the day</li> <li>• You are lacking concentration</li> <li>• You suffer from general malaise or poor appetite</li> <li>• You are getting regular chest infections</li> <li>• You are needing to use your ventilator more than normal</li> </ul> <p>Your PCF has dropped below 270L/min but is greater than 160L/min</p> <p>and/or your SpO<sub>2</sub> is lower than 95% on air</p>	<p>Contact GP/ ventilation service for a review or advice</p> <p>Consider starting your home supply of antibiotics (if you have them) if sputum green or yellow</p> <p>Monitor PCF and aim to keep above 160L/min</p> <p>Use methods needed to increase PCF to greater than 160Lmin and to ensure sputum is cleared:</p> <p>Manually assisted coughing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>MI-E <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Frog Breathing <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NIV <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Bag assisted breaths <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Monitor SpO<sub>2</sub> if possible and aim to keep above 95%</p> <p>If on ventilation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use as you feel needed</li> <li>• Or use to keep SpO<sub>2</sub> greater than 95%</li> </ul> <p>Contact ventilation service for advice</p>

**Your symptoms have not improved or continue to worsen**

<b>If the following describes you</b>	<b>Your immediate action is</b>
<p><b>You are unwell with cold or cough and this has not improved with antibiotics /or treatment prescribed above</b></p> <p><b>Your PCF has dropped below 160L/min despite using maximum assistance strategies on green/amber pages</b></p> <p><b>You are producing phlegm (sputum) and you are unable to clear it</b></p> <p><b>You are very breathless</b></p> <p><b>You are not able to keep SpO<sub>2</sub> above 95%</b></p>	<p><b>Contact your GP or local ventilatory service for an emergency assessment and advice.</b></p> <p><b>If you are on ventilation you can use your ventilator to support you while you wait for advice and or assessment</b></p> <p><b>If you have an oxygen alert card make sure you give this the health professional looking after you</b></p> <p><b>DO NOT DELAY – GET HELP NOW</b></p>

**Useful contact numbers:**

My physiotherapist is \_\_\_\_\_

Contact tel \_\_\_\_\_

My Doctor's tel \_\_\_\_\_

Local respiratory service \_\_\_\_\_

Specialist respiratory service \_\_\_\_\_

Ventilation service \_\_\_\_\_