



Getting the most out of the NHS for your patients

Top Tips for GPs

This document is a GP's guide to how you and your patients can get the most out of the new initiatives and projects developed in Sheffield as part of the Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) plan.

QIPP is the key platform for ensuring a financially and clinically viable health system for the future. It's about saving money, but it's also about the clinical transformation needed to unlock quality improvement and service reform.

Clinicians make decisions every day which have an impact on how the NHS budget is spent and it is **crucial that clinicians are at the heart of QIPP**.

Health professionals have the best understanding of how high-quality care can be delivered on the frontline and QIPP asks them to look at their daily clinical practice and identify where making changes will lead to better care for patients as well as eliminating waste.

QIPP this year has very much been led and developed by local GPs and is designed to **benefit Sheffield patients whilst making the best use of NHS resources**.

Many of the projects are led by clinicians across the city, who've felt for many years that things could be done differently (and better).

We hope that you find the top tips in this document useful. If you have any queries please contact your Consortium Business Manager or Jane Howcroft, NHS Sheffield Clinical Executive on 305 1086.

Dr Trish Edney, North Consortium
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Top Tips for GPs

Avoiding emergency admissions

These initiatives have been developed with, or are led by, local GPs to benefit your patients and make best use of NHS resources

How to use SPA to avoid an admission

All emergency referrals should now go via the SPA on 0114 305 1460. SPA can arrange access to alternative services to reduce the need to admit patients to hospital, including “step up” care. The nurses working through SPA all have access to SystemOne so please ensure records are shared to enable them to see the full clinical record. This will avoid risks of inappropriate advice regarding medication etc.

See this link on the NHS Sheffield intranet for more information: [SPA flow chart](#)

GP Assessment Unit (GPAU), Firth 1, NGH

Website: <http://sheffieldgpau.webs.com/>

The GPAU aims to bridge the gap between primary and secondary care by providing a referral option for adult patients who do not have obvious urgent medical need but who are at risk of hospital admission. The unit is GP-led and able to provide a range of services including rapid-access diagnostic tests, medical assessment and therapy which previously were only accessible to GPs by referring their patient to hospital. If you identify a suitable patient in surgery or on a home visit, or if you would normally direct patients to A&E with a referral letter, please contact the GPAU as an appropriate alternative.

Patients to refer: Any patients with medical problems who may be at risk of admission. So far the following conditions have regularly been seen and treated on the unit: respiratory, cardiovascular, bowel and urinary problems, infections (e.g. cellulitis), vomiting, severe headache, joint pain.

How to refer to the GPAU: Telephone the SPA on 305 1460 and ask for the GPAU, you will be put directly through for a GP to GP discussion and together you will agree whether or not your patient is suitable to attend the unit.

Not suitable for the unit: Any patient for whom an existing pathway exists (such as DVT, chest pain, stroke), A&E, haemoptysis /malaena, neurology, orthopaedics/trauma/burns, ophthalmology, obstetrics, paediatrics, surgical patients.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Emergency Department – Clinical Decisions Unit

DVT Rule Out service: Open from 9am to 7pm, 7 days a week. Please send a letter with your patient, addressed to the DVT rule out nurse. The letter should contain a list of the patient’s current medications and a brief medical history.

Chest Pain Rule Out service: Open from 9am to 7pm, 7 days a week. Please contact the Chest Pain Nurse Specialist on 0114 2715969 or bleep 807 from the Northern General Hospital switchboard.

If your patient has a complex medical history it would be helpful if you could send brief details along with them.

Children's health: common childhood conditions

There are many A&E attendances at SCH each week for problems which GPs can and should manage. A group of GPs, nurses and paediatricians has recently revised the advice for parents and professionals on a range of common childhood illnesses.

This link on the NHS Sheffield intranet opens a suite of guidance and advice which you can share with parents: [Common childhood conditions](#)

We are asking all GPs to follow the guidance attached as it will ensure consistent approach to the management of these problems. A&E at SCH have signed up to do the same

Top Tips for GPs

Elective Referrals

**Developed with local clinicians, using up to date evidence.
Enabling fair access to services and making best use of NHS resources**

We now have a detailed resource on the intranet which gathers together all the latest elective pathways in one place. You can also find referral guidance / forms, information about how to access alternatives to hospital, and how to obtain advice.

It covers all the specialities on a topic by topic basis. We would particularly like to draw your attention to the new musculoskeletal pathways, particularly for hip and knee joint replacement. Any referrals which do not conform to the new pathway / use the correct paperwork will be “bounced back”.

This page also includes links to Map of Medicine, Clinical Knowledge Summaries, NHS Evidence, Individual Referral Request forms and referral “front sheets” which interface with the clinical system used in your practice.

All this has been developed by GPs, for GPs and can be found on the NHS Sheffield intranet at: [referrals](#) in the “information for health professionals” section of the public website.

Dyspepsia

The Open Access Endoscopy service offered at RHH and NGH has a single mandatory referral form. This has been agreed by the LMC and ensures efficient, NICE compliant use of the service.

Requests must be on the correct form; this is on the PCT Intranet, please use this link

[**Open Access Upper GI Endoscopy / Dyspepsia Referral Form \(56kb Word\)**](#)

Requests must be accompanied by a helicobacter test result; wrong and incomplete forms will be returned. This will increase efficiency, reduce the number of unnecessary endoscopies and improve access for patients.

Primary Eyecare Acute Referral Scheme (PEARS)

There are 24 PEARS optometrists across the city. All have received advanced training to provide an enhanced service to patients.

Eight of the PEARS optometrists work with SPA to triage referrals from all optometrists received by GOS18 or Optometrist letter.

If a GP practice receives a GOS18 they should fax it to SPA and inform Lynda Liddament on 0114 305 1179 or lynda.liddament@nhs.net which Optometrist sent the GOS18.

Patients reported with conditions that fall within the PEARS remit are offered choice of a PEARS Optometrist.

Once a PEARS Optometrist has seen the patient they complete a report form that is sent to the GP. The report records the initial diagnosis, the PEARS Optometrist diagnosis and the outcome.

If the PEARS Optometrist decides a referral is necessary they offer the patient choice of secondary care and refer to the Ophthalmology department of the patient's chosen hospital.

[PEARS information pack for GPs](#)

This is the Ophthalmology section of the pathways.

Cataracts

All qualified optometrists provide assessment for cataracts.

If a GP suspects a patient has a cataract they should advise them to see an Optometrist for an eye examination. The Optometrist will score the cataract using a system agreed by NHSS, the Cataract Unit at STHFT and the Local Optometric Committee (LOC). The assessment referral form is the only method of referral accepted.

The Ophthalmology Department will not accept referrals direct from a GP.

The assessment score for referral is 10. The Optometrist will offer the patient choice of secondary care provider at this point.

If a patient scores less than 10 but the Optometrist still feels referral is necessary, they send the assessment form to SPA to be triaged by a PEARS Optometrist. If referral is approved at this point, SPA send the papers to the patient's chosen hospital.

If the Triaging Optometrist does not agree referral, the Optometrist can apply for an Individual Funding Request (IFR).

Cataract assessment/referral form and pathway information for optometrists

These are for information only and can found in the Ophthalmology section of the pathways under information.

Advance notice: forthcoming PLI on MSK pathways

Please note, we will be running a GP education event in September, which will look at a variety of MSK issues eg arthroplasty, soft tissue problems, osteoporosis, foot and ankle, and spinal pathway

The event will be run twice (ie it will be repeated, it is not a two part event):

Tuesday 13th September and Wednesday 28th September 2011.

Registration opens at 1.30, first speaker at 2.00, due to close around 5.00.

To register please email roni.foster-ash@nhs.net

Top Tips for GPs

Supporting people with Long Term Conditions

Evidence based, local services to help people manage their long term conditions and improve their health status. Please consider referring your patients to these services, and please use the new stroke pathway

COPD services and support

Please consider referring your COPD patients to Pulmonary Rehabilitation, endorsed by NICE as an effective intervention. Pulmonary rehab can improve quality of life, increase exercise tolerance and reduce risk of exacerbations. Referral is easy, through SPA 0114 305 1460

Please follow the link below for a “one stop shop” for resources on all respiratory diseases, including formulary information, referral forms and guidelines, local services and the Map of Medicine, tailored for local use: [Respiratory](#)

New Stroke Pathway

The recent stroke PLI (22 June 2011) launched the new pathways for stroke management. These can now be found on the NHS Sheffield intranet at Referrals Information\neurology\TIA and stroke, or click on the links: [Stroke guidance](#) and [Stroke guidelines](#)

The guidance and referrals forms for rapid access stroke assessment can be found there or click here: [Rapid Stroke Assessment Clinic referral form](#)

Please note if you are suspicious a patient may have had a stroke - speed is of the essence and there is always a consultant neurologist on call via the Hallamshire hospital (bleep 939) where an excellent thrombolysis service is now fully established.

Early intervention greatly reduces morbidity and mortality in selected patients. Early detection and management of a trial fibrillation with Warfarin greatly reduces the risks of stroke. The LES for Warfarin covers initiation and there is NO cap on this aspect of the LES budgets.

Weigh Ahead weight management service

Weigh Ahead was established in the autumn of 2010. It is a service for people aged 15-75 years who are obese or overweight and have previously been unsuccessful in losing weight. It is an intensive, three month intervention to help people with a BMI greater than 40 (or 35 if other factors are present) to make long lasting changes to their lifestyle and to stabilise their weight, or reduce it, so that extreme measures such as bariatric surgery may be avoided.

Click here to open the [Weigh Ahead Referral Form](#)
Or look under [Referrals](#) for more information, including a leaflet for patients.

Services for people with heart failure

Heart Failure remains a common cause of admission. The Sheffield heart failure service provides valuable guidance on how to manage patients with heart failure. Optimisation of treatment is a key aspect and the echocardiography referral scheme remains linked (where wanted) to a one stop cardiologist opinion. See the NHS Sheffield intranet (referrals information for GPs\cardiology\ cardiac diagnostics) for the echocardiography open access referral form or click here: [GP open access echo form](#)

Support for people with angina

The Angina Plan is a facilitated, self-directed treatment programme that helps patients manage their symptoms. It aims to increase understanding of the condition and medication, develops coping skills, relaxation techniques and offers advice about activity and goal setting. RCT evidence shows the Angina Plan intervention is associated with a reduction in anxiety and depression, decreased frequency of angina and a reduction in the use of GTN.

Refer any patients having a confirmed diagnosis of angina whom you consider could benefit through SPA 0114 305 1460, using the Angina Plan referral form click here:

[Angina referrals](#)

Renal medicine

Renal medicine provides an excellent advice service whereby GPs can email for help and guidance on how best to manage renal problems, use this address:

Sht-tr.CKDEnquiry@nhs.net

Top Tips for GPs

Community Services

Developed with local clinicians, community based alternatives to hospital

Falls

Please press control and click on this link to find a quick guide to all you need to know about the new falls service, including how to refer:

[**Falls Service Cover Letter \(43kb pdf\)**](#)

For more information, including the falls and bone health pathway, referral guidance and forms, go to the Sheffield intranet \ Referrals information for GP practices\ older people\ falls. Click here to go to the community physio referral form:

[**Community Domiciliary Physiotherapy Referral Form**](#)

Continence pathway

The adult continence pathway can be found under Referrals information under both gynaecology and urology, or click here:

[**Adult Continence Pathway \(85kb Word\)**](#)

The pathway summarises recent evidence and provides you with guidance on management of common continence problems, including advice on “red flag” symptoms and alternatives to referral to secondary care. Our community based services offer a range of treatments and support for people with continence problems.

Press control and click the link to access the referral form:

[**Continence Advisory Service \(Adult\)/ Women’s Health Physiotherapy Clinic Referral Form \(48kb Word\)**](#)

Press control and click link to access the patient leaflet for Continence Advisory Service:

[**Continence Advisory Service Leaflet**](#)