



Excellence in health, putting people first

Directory of Services Newsletter March 2016

Issue 1

Welcome to the first issue of the City Hospitals Sunderland Directory of Services Newsletter. This newsletter will be issued bi-monthly and will update GPs and practice staff with changes to the Trust's Directory, including new services and those no longer available.

This issue also includes a 'Frequently asked Questions' section which provides general information and advice which we hope will be useful to those referring patients to the Trust and will ultimately improve the referral process for patients.

Contact

- Are you having difficulty locating the correct service for your patient?
- Do you have a question regarding a referral made via the e-referral service?
- Would you like to update your practice contact details?

Contact:

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E-Referral Service Manager

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Frequently asked questions

“My practice receives multiple calls from CHS booking staff requesting referral letters.”

When an appointment booking is made it is important the referral letter is attached within 24 hours for a '2ww' service referral and no longer than 5 days for an urgent/routine referral. Delays in attaching a referral letter prevent review of the referral information which can identify if the patient needs to be seen earlier than the date of the booked appointment. It also gives the team an opportunity to ensure the patient is booked into an appropriate service or whether the referral needs to be rescheduled to a more appropriate service.

Many practices attach the clinical letter when the referral is made however there remains a number where frequently letters are outstanding for more than 5 days from date of booking which result in calls to practices.

“I’m not sure if the service I have selected is the correct service for the referral”

“I can’t find a service I feel is appropriate”

Following feedback from practices and a review of services and inappropriate referrals a number of changes have been made to the information within the Directory of Services to help practice staff find the correct service for their patient. Some guidance can be found in the next section within this newsletter. Feedback from practices is welcomed as we continue to support referrers in finding the correct service at first referral in order to reduce the number of cancellations required to ensure a patient is seen in the most appropriate outpatient clinic.

“Can a referral be made to a named clinician via the e-referral service?”

Yes, you can search for services using a clinician’s name. Referrals to a ‘named’ clinician will limit choice of appointments available to the patient and is generally used to maintain continuity of care for patients who have seen a specific clinician previously and require further referral.

Searching for a service

Feedback from practices in 2015 suggested 42% of those using the e-referral service experienced frustration when trying to find a specific service. Of that group, 45% confirmed they ‘Never’, ‘Very Rarely’ or ‘Rarely’ looked at the information included in the Directory of Services when searching for services.

When searching for services please consider the following as a guide:

Select ‘Specialty’ – The list offered is a national list, some services may be attached to multiple specialties.

Select ‘Clinic Type’ – If you are unable to find an appropriate clinic type for the condition you are referring please select ‘not otherwise specified’ which will offer services which are not linked to more specific clinic types.

‘Clinical term’ – If you are unsure as to which ‘specialty’ to select you can search using the ‘clinical term’ field. By entering a condition (such as ‘ear pain’) a list of relevant services will be listed within your search.

‘Named clinician’ – If you would like to search for a service linked to a specific consultant/clinician (for continuity of care for example), you can complete this field when and you will be offered services attached to that consultant/clinician. Feedback from practice staff in 2015 suggested 73% of those using the e-referral service ‘Never’, ‘Very Rarely’ or ‘Rarely’ used the service to refer to a ‘named clinician’. Some practice staff also advised that they were unaware that ‘named’ referrals could be made electronically and 42% gave feedback that they referred on paper for ‘named’ referrals rather than using the e-referral service.

Referrer Alerts – When searching for services please review the ‘referrer alert’. This will contain important information relevant to the service and may reduce the risk of a referral being ‘redirected’ to a more appropriate service if specific instructions are followed.

Specific Service Booking Guide – Before selecting a service please read the ‘conditions treated’ and ‘exclusions’ sections to ensure the referral meets the criteria and to reduce risk of your patient’s appointment being cancelled and booked in to a more appropriate service. Feedback from practice staff in 2015 suggested 26% of those using the e-referral service were frustrated by the number of appointments cancelled due to inappropriate referrals – please help to reduce this by reading the information provided.

Offering Choice – When selecting a service please consider all locations offered by the provider to increase your patient’s choice of appointment dates and times.

Service Information & News

Dermatology services

The Trust’s Booking Office continues to receive faxed referrals for Dermatology services. Whilst there is a dermatology clinic at Sunderland Royal Hospital, the Dermatology services are managed by County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.

If you have any queries regarding Dermatology referrals please contact: Mark Jones on 0132 5744160.

We are aware patients are being given CHS contact details in error for appointment queries which can be frustrating for the patient. We would be grateful if you could review your practice information and remove any incorrect contact details.

Varicose Veins and Tonsillectomy referrals from Sunderland CCG practices

There is an agreement with Sunderland CCG that all referrals for tonsillectomies and varicose veins must be accompanied by a CCG [proforma](#). Can you please ensure that the [proforma](#) is attached at the same time that the referral/booking is made to prevent risk of delay to first appointment or cancellation of a booked appointment if this is not received with 48 hours.

Gastro Service

Information is included within the Directory of Services advising that patients are not informed of the booked “triage” appointment date/time as this is not their formal appointment. Can you please ensure that patients are made aware that they will receive a letter through the post confirming the date and time of their outpatient appointment.