

Supporting patients and GPs with hospital referrals

To ensure patients are seen by the right person at the right time, we have changed the way GP referrals are dealt with. These changes have been designed to make the process better for you, to prevent wasted hospital appointments; and help to improve the efficiency of the local health service.

Increasingly specialist doctor and nurse services are based within the local community. These clinics can help you avoid the need to go to a hospital. A new referral service has been designed to help ensure you are seen at the best place at the right time.

Your GP's referral letter will be reviewed by a local clinician; with the relevant specialist knowledge, who:

- May give advice to your GP to arrange further tests or try new treatments which may save you from going to a hospital
- or;
- Agrees that you should have an appointment to see a specialist nurse or doctor. When this is the case staff from the Referral Support Service will phone you to help you make an appointment by:
 - A telephone call to arrange an appointment.
 - Send you a letter offering you a choice of hospitals and contact details to enable you to book your own appointment (if we cannot reach you by phone)
 - The team will also tell you where you can find out more about your condition; such as online resources and local support groups.

What happens if I need to cancel my referral appointment?

Please wait until the hospital writes to you to confirm your appointment date and time and then call them on the number that they will provide on the appointment confirmation letter to make any changes

Remember - please make sure that your GP has your up-to-date telephone number and address details.