

## Advice and Guidance

Consultants at the Royal Surrey are responding increasingly to electronic requests from GPs for Advice & Guidance. It is proving to be an effective mechanism when GPs are unsure whether or not to make a referral and is a good example of the positive benefits that arise when our clinicians work differently with colleagues in primary care.

Since it was launched last year, with cardiology, 140 GPs have sent 624 requests to the RSCH alone, and month on month the use of Advice and Guidance (A&G) is growing. Over 15 specialities are now available via A&G.

Guildford and Waverley CCG's most recent audit shows that between 2% and 4% of patients for whom the GP has used the A&G function are then referred for specialist input. This

One GP referred a case involving a baby with an umbilical hernia, by sending an image attachment, using the advice and guidance service with RSCH. This resulted in the GP being able to reassure the worried parent that the child was fine and saved them a trip to hospital.

means our consultants are able to devote more time to the more complex cases and, in turn, it delivers a saving to the local health system that can be invested elsewhere.

Our consultants are reserving time to respond to A&G requests, within a few working days, much shorter than the waiting times for an outpatient appointment.

Quick reassurance can be given to patients by GPs if test results are normal, saving patients a journey to and from hospital.

Advice and Guidance is a service which allows GPs to seek advice from secondary care consultants to enable the management of patients in primary care. This might include requests or any other advice that the GP might find helpful.

Practices can submit requests electronically via the e-Referral system. A consultant will then review the advice requests within an agreed timeframe and respond to the GP. Examples of when our colleagues in primary care may wish to seek advice include requests for opinions on test results, medication advice and interpretation of diagnostic tests such as ECGs.

If anyone has any questions about the service, or would like to know more, please get in touch with Gem Ryan, Planned Care Commissioning Manager at the CCG

([geneviveryan@nhs.net](mailto:geneviveryan@nhs.net), 01483 405454).

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*A cardiology advice and guidance request was sent to RSCH with the patient's anticoagulation results and an ECG showing paroxysmal atrial fibrillation. The response resulted in the GP being able to give reassurance to the patient about their condition and avoided a longer wait for the patient to be seen in secondary care.*

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