



## Single referral for Wirral CT services

After a busy surgery, GPs are often met with a task of filling out referral forms for services. The frustration is that once a clinical decision is made, the GP then has to face the form, finding the correct one amongst all of the 100s of forms that we have filed on our systems, wondering if it is up to date and then worried about finding all of the information requested, some of which seems bizarre. We have listened and we have responded.

As part of a whole system reform, we have **streamlined our referral process**. The clinical input is all that should be needed from the GP - that will be the end of the involvement of the GP.

In developing a **single referral form within your clinical system** all the relevant information already collected will automatically be added. A clinical review will rationalise the additional information to that which is absolutely essential to the referral and wherever possible any additional requirements can be managed between the referred service and your practice staff. We want referrals to WCT to be as simple as possible after making the decision to refer, and this is how it should be. Some services will not be included initially and we will work with WROCS and the CCG to streamline these, such as services contracted under AQP, e.g. physiotherapy and podiatry.

This is a major change for our services that are now working to adapt to the change. We have **engagement from some Wirral practice staff** that are helping with the implementation along with the CCG and will facilitate the production of a process that will merge with EMIS to result in an electronic referral document that can be sent by secure email; or by fax if the practice has not modernised to secure IG practices. If essential information is missing for a patient to be directed accurately to the correct service or within the service, there will be a process to collect this from practice staff without additional reference to the GP.

**There is a pilot period** starting after discussion with the LMC; to include circa 5 practices to try this out. We will monitor and adjust the process to result in a final implementation in mid-March 2017. You do not need to change anything now and existing referral pathways will remain open for a period of time after implementation.

This has not been a simple process and requires changes within many services, being sensitive to their requirements and ensuring that there is no unintended detriment to patients. Added to which there is a need to communicate this early and gather views from GPs, practice staff and services prior to full implementation.

I am very excited about this from a personal perspective as a GP wanting to see improvements for us all, but more particularly see this as a transformational change in a large organisation sensitive to the pressures felt by GP colleagues that will welcome a reduction in workload.

- Decision to refer - this is all that is needed.
- Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust working to reduce GP workload

With best wishes



**Karen Howell**  
Chief Executive



**Professor Ewen Sim**  
Medical Director

## Support for your patients who work for Wirral CT

As a provider of health services in Wirral we are well aware of the benefits of good health and wellbeing and we encourage our staff to take responsibility for their own positive health and wellbeing. We also recognise that work is good for our staff.

We are constantly looking for ways to **reduce our sickness absence rates** whilst at the same time ensuring staff are appropriately supported when they are unwell. As a GP we know that you will often have limited information about your patient's employer and the support they can provide. This letter aims to draw your attention to the arrangements that we, as a large local employer, have in place for our staff. We hope this information will **assist you in supporting our staff** who may be your patient by signposting them to other health professionals for additional support or in making recommendations for their return to work.

As an organisation, we deliver excellent care to our patients; but we know that at times our staff do not always put their own health needs at the top of their list of priorities. Our Managing Attendance policy ensures that we support all staff who are ill, not just those with underlying or chronic conditions and we aim to ensure that they have the support they require to allow them to sustain their attendance at work.

The [attached sheet](#) outlines the **support services that we offer to our staff**. We would like you to **encourage any of your patients who work for the Trust** to access these support services, as many have very short waiting times which allow staff to receive appropriate care and advice in a timely manner and to be assured that we will work with the individual to facilitate a sustained return to work.

If you have any queries relating to the contents of this letter or the [supporting fact sheet](#) then please do not hesitate to contact Karen Walkden-Smith, Deputy Director of HR on 0151 643 5306  
Download - [Staff Support Fact Sheet](#)

Yours sincerely



**Professor Ewen Sim**  
Medical Director

## Community Ophthalmology open day: Wednesday 8 March

Come to our open day and find out more about our consultant-led ophthalmology service can help your patients. Check out our state of the art equipment and chat with our Consultant Ophthalmologist **11.30am-2.00pm** - **Lunch provided** Venue - Heswall Clinic, 270 Telegraph Road, CH60 7SG RSVP [gillianhirst@nhs.net](mailto:gillianhirst@nhs.net)

## Chlamydia testing

Sexual Health Wirral is seeing increased attendances for emergency contraception and STI testing. Please remember to offer all patients aged 15-24 a Chlamydia test when attending your surgery, testing is easy and quick and the Sexual Health Team oversee all test results and management of those requiring treatment. Please contact the team on 0051 653 4416 for more testing supplies.

## New telephone & fax numbers

Please note the **new** telephone and fax numbers for the following services. Please update your records and referral forms: SPA phone number – **0151 514 6392**, SPA fax – **0151 514 2583**. Fax number for Podiatry and Ophthalmology Services - **0151 514 2532**

Comments and feedback to: [wcnt.communications@nhs.net](mailto:wcnt.communications@nhs.net)