



North East and North Cumbria

Our Reference SD\North East and North
Cumbria ICB\FOI ICB593

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Durham University Science Park
Durham
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20 November 2023

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

Thank you for your request received by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 31 October 2023 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

NENC ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Tees Valley (which covers the 5 councils that make it up – Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

Your Request

We would like to request information pertaining to the referral pathways for Dermatology within the NHS North East & North Cumbria ICB region.

Could you please confirm the processes in which patients are offered choice for eligible providers and referred into these services, and, if possible, provide a referral pathway flow?

We would also ask for confirmation of the Service Specifications along with a list of contracted providers for the following services: Dermatology

Should you require any further information to action this request please do not hesitate to contact us.

Our Response

County Durham place

Patients are referred into the relevant dermatology service/pathway from Primary Care. Referrals into community tele-dermatology are across the county and are currently sent to a central referral point, therefore choice of provider is not relevant. 2 Week Wait (2ww) referrals to dermatology all go to County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust

(CDDFT). Other places also refer into CDDFT. This includes a single point of access for 2ww dermatology and plastics services. Patients could be given a choice of face-to-face community dermatology provider at the time of referral by the practice:

Two referral pathways are noted below:



Tele-skin Pathway



CDDFT Dermatology

taken from SOP_Sept: GP Referral Guide - v

We would also ask for confirmation of the Service Specifications along with a list of contracted providers for the following services:



NECSD0116 -

Teledermatology Serv



NECSD0052 AQP

Dermatology - Cestria

Contracted providers are

- County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust
- Cestria Healthcare
- Dr Lawson
- Dr Kamali
- Dr Kitson
- Dr Pears
- Dr Cooper
- Dr Owen

Please note the above list are our GPSI providers who take referrals for the tele-dermatology service.

Newcastle Gateshead place

Most of our patients access Dermatology services at The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (FT), although patients can access all available providers via patient choice which is offered by GP practices when a referral is being made. Other fairly local services include South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS FT, County Durham & Darlington NHS FT and Nuffield Health Newcastle Hospital.

Patients are referred via NHS e-Referral Service.

Newcastle Gateshead place is the lead commissioner for the Newcastle service. We do not have a service specification which covers this service.

North Cumbria place

The process is patient choice at the point of referral via the eRS system. The contracted providers in North Cumbria are:

- North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT (via the provider's Directory of Service)
- Carlisle Healthcare (service specification embedded below):



CMS Dermatology
Service Specification.r

North Tyneside and Northumberland places

Most patients based in North Tyneside place access Dermatology services at the Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT, although patients can access all available providers via patient choice which is offered by GP practices when a referral is being made.

Other fairly local services include South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS FT, County Durham & Darlington NHS FT and Nuffield Health Newcastle Hospital.

Patients are referred via NHS e-Referral Service.

South Tyneside place

GPs will offer choice at the point of referral.

For Acute Dermatology Assessments, the process is:

1. Check criteria.
 - Generalised pustular psoriasis
 - Erythroderma
 - Eczema with extensive herpes simplex viral infection – eczema herpeticum
 - Other dermatoses if very severe
2. Confirm a transfer for acute care is consistent with the patient's wishes.
 - Patient's wishes
 - Advance Statement
 - Advance Care Plan
 - Expressed wishes
3. Provide the required information.
 - Patient details
 - If an interpreter is required including sign language
 - Veteran status, if relevant
 - Any learning, physical or sensory disability
 - Any cognitive impairment:
 - if they will be accompanied by a representative
 - who is point of contact for the patient
 - If they have given permission for the specialist to discuss their case with a relative or carer

Note that patient demographics and referrer details are automatically forwarded by the electronic referral system.

- Clinical details
 - Reason for referral
 - Urgency of request
 - History of presenting symptoms
 - Effect on daily living, employment, mood
 - Relevant social factors
 - Examination findings including body mass index (BMI), if relevant
 - Investigations and results
 - Options already pursued
 - Other services involved
 - Co-morbidities and past medical history
 - Current medications
 - Allergies
4. Contact the service – contact details vary depending on provider.

For Non-acute Dermatology Assessment:

1. Check the criteria:
 - 2 week wait criteria – Suspicion of malignant melanoma or squamous cell carcinoma.
 - Routine criteria
 - Suspected basal cell carcinoma (BCC).
 - Benign skin lesions that meet the Value Based Clinical Commissioning Policies (VBCCP) criteria.
 - Severe cystic acne with scarring.

- Extreme psychological response to acne.
 - Prolonged acne beyond the age of 25 years.
 - Acne with no response or relapse on treatment with oral antibiotics.
 - Hyperhidrosis treatment with botulinum toxin if:
 - the search for an underlying cause has been exhausted.
 - advice on lifestyle management has been followed.
 - 20% aluminium chloride hexahydrate has failed or is contraindicated.
 - any underlying anxiety has been identified and managed.
2. Administrative exclusions
 - Patients under 16 years.
 - Referral from Nurse Practitioners when they are asking for a diagnostic opinion. Referrals from nurses where patients have had a diagnosis made and need advice and treatment are acceptable.
 - Consultant to consultant referrals if unrelated to the condition being managed by the first consultant.
 - Referrals for a wig only. Wigs can be prescribed in primary care.
 3. Not routinely funded:
 - Removal of tattoos.
 - Resurfacing procedures e.g., dermabrasion, chemical peels, and laser treatment.
 - Removal of benign skin lesions, including scars, for cosmetic reasons.
 - Referrals for cryotherapy for warts and verrucas in non-immunocompromised patients.
 - Hirsutism
 4. Do not refer patients with a diagnostic requirement for the exclusion of malignancy, but the Dermatology Department will not remove benign asymptomatic lesions. Removal of benign skin lesions may be appropriate if there is a clinical need.
 5. If the procedure needs prior funding approval, consider completing the prior approval ticket or Individual Funding Request (IFR) via the Check+ system.
 6. Prepare the required information:
 - 2-week wait (tele-triage)
 - 3 photos taken using the Consultant Connect App
 - A close-up – attach a dermatoscope to a camera or mobile phone
 - A second close-up taken without a dermatoscope from a distance of 20 cm to show the size and shape of the lesion in its context
 - A more distant overview without a dermatoscope to show the location of the lesion.

Patient and Clinical information as per acute pathway above.

Routine process:

1. Contact the service
2. If making a 2-week wait referral
 - Send request via NHS e-Referral attaching the referral form and photos. Images must be of suitable quality and not blurred to enable the referral to be triaged.
 - The consultant may downgrade the referral to a non-urgent or routine appointment. If the consultant declines the referral, the hospital will inform the general practitioner and advise primary care management.
3. If urgent or routine referral, send request via NHS e-Referral.
4. Inform the patient:
 - To arrange patient transportation, if applicable.
 - Ensure they are aware of the request and the reason for it.
 - The request will be reviewed and advice or an outpatient review may be arranged as an alternative.
 - To advise of any change in circumstance (e.g. getting worse or becoming pregnant) as this may affect the request.

- To contact the service if they are unable to attend or decide not to go ahead with the procedure.

For Dermatology Advice:

1. For acute phone advice, contact the on-call dermatology registrar via the switchboard.
2. For non-acute advice there are 2 options:
 - Send an Advice Request via NHS e-Referral. Use the teledermatology facility to attach a photograph of the patient's condition. Local consent for taking images is required as per practice policy.
 - Send a written request to Dermatology Department.
3. Contracted Providers and Service Specifications (where available):
 - County Durham and Darlington NHS FT– no service specification available
 - South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT – no service specification available
 - The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT – no service specification available

Sunderland place

Sunderland has a single point of access for non-urgent and routine dermatology referrals. Patients are referred to the Sunderland Community Dermatology Service for routine/non-urgent conditions which is provided by South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust. For suspected cancer, patients are referred via the two-week-wait tele-dermatology pathway which is provided by County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.

Community Dermatology Specification:



STSFT Community
Dermatology Service

Tees Valley place

The current providers for Tees Valley place are as follows:

- South Tees Hospitals NHS FT – the Clinical Advice Service offers the choice for South Tees area patients.
- Ramsay – receives referrals from the Clinical Advice Service
- Headland Medical Centre – patients are offered choice when referred by GP

The service specifications are detailed below:

- South Tees Hospitals NHS FT:



SCHEDULE 2A

Service Specification |



FINAL Service

Specification v2.6.doc

- Ramsay:



Dermatology
Service Specification

- Headland Medical Centre:



HAST Comm Minor
Skin Service Spec.doc

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log.

Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to the Senior Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the North of England Commissioning Support Unit.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours sincerely

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer