



Hammersmith and Fulham
Clinical Commissioning Group

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To: All Hammersmith & Fulham CCG Member Practices
Via: Email Only

Friday, 10 April 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Routine Referrals

The country and NHS are facing an unprecedented challenge, as we approach what we hope will be the apex of this pandemic.

Much of our routine work has had to be suspended, reducing the number of face to face consultations and prioritising those patients who need our immediate care.

The acute hospitals in the sector have, effectively, stopped all routine outpatient activity and we are doing our part by avoiding routine referrals until the crisis is over. This allows hospitals to focus their resources towards pandemic treatment whilst reducing risk for staff and outpatients. Any routine referrals you make now will be returned to be re-referred when this crisis is over.

Our recommendation is that you explain the situation to patients and that you empower them to represent when the situation has improved. You should, of course, safety-net patients to represent should their condition deteriorate as you would in normal practice. Where you feel a patient is particularly vulnerable or you are concerned about relying on them to represent, we would encourage you to track these patients within your practices.

Inevitably you will have some patients who urgently require a review, which will include patients whose condition has deteriorated significantly. For clear urgent referrals, you can still refer into the hospital. These referrals will be reviewed by specialists, who will either try to manage the patient remotely (by providing you with robust advice), by telephone or video consultation, or in-extremis a face to face appointment.

You will also be able to access advice for patients who are deteriorating or who have complex and long term conditions. We are rapidly implementing this across the sector and will provide further updates as soon as they are available, but it will ensure that you have access (either electronically or by telephone) to specialist opinion.

2 Week Wait referrals must continue to be made, although individual pathway guidelines may be adjusted. Please keep yourself updated on these changes.

Chair: Dr James Cavanagh
Chief Officer: Jo Ohlson
Managing Director: Janet Cree

NHS North West London Collaborative of Clinical Commissioning Groups are a collaboration of NHS Brent CCG, NHS Central London CCG, NHS Ealing CCG, NHS Hammersmith & Fulham CCG, NHS Harrow CCG, NHS Hillingdon CCG, NHS Hounslow CCG, and NHS West London CCG.

Maternity and other high risk pathways (e.g. rapid chest pain) are still running and accessed through the usual routes, however waiting times may be extended and you should consider contacting services directly if you have patients who need urgent support.

Yours sincerely,



James Cavanagh
Chair
Hammersmith and Fulham CCG

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