

**Dear Primary Care colleagues,**

You may have heard already from your Health Board about the national digital dermatology programme. This is a national programme to provide GPs and other referring clinicians with an easy, quick and safe process to attach an image to a SCI Gateway dermatology referral. We are writing to provide an update and reminder about what is coming soon and what to look out for.

Following an open procurement process Consultant Connect have been awarded the national framework contract. The Consultant Connect app will be downloadable onto your phone from the Apple and Google Play stores and provide 'pass-through' image capture. This allows the use of excellent quality phone cameras to safely take photographs of a patient's skin concern and securely transfer those images to the patient's digital record within NHS Scotland's National Digital Platform. The solution is fully IG compliant with no images or data remaining on the user's device. Additionally, CHI look-up will ensure the patient details are correct and SCI Gateway integration will mean photos from the pass-through app will be added to SCI Gateway referral in a similar manner to adding attachments at present.

**Please be reassured that there has been primary care involved in the whole design and development process and the solution is simple, non-time-consuming and intuitive to use.**

The capture and transfer of digital image(s) alongside a dermatology referral can significantly improve patient care and in turn benefit primary care. For example, patients referred with a lesion suspicious of cancer may be reassured that it is benign without the need to attend a face-to-face appointment. Conversely, images included in a routine referral could mean a patient may be regraded to 'urgent suspicion of cancer' following specialist triage. Others may be referred directly for a skin biopsy or to another specialty without needing to attend a prior dermatology clinic. With early specialist advice and guidance the number of repeated consultations within primary care can be reduced. It can also allow more accurate prioritisation of patients for urgent appointments.

Many referrals to dermatology already include an attached photograph and many GPs have worked out their own way of doing this. However, this app will provide a secure, Information Governance (IG) approved way of doing this without the need for all GPs to be issued with board managed devices just for this purpose.

Implementation will begin with early adopting Health Boards in October 2024 with all Health Boards will be live by March 2025.

A pilot group of Lothian Practices are already set up to use the new application and all Lothian practices will be able to start using the app from late January. When your practice is able to start using the new app your practice will be communicated with directly.

Further information including training opportunities, user guides and details of when the app will be live in your area will follow shortly.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the team at [gjnh.cfsdinnovationteam@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:gjnh.cfsdinnovationteam@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk) with any queries or questions you may have.

# Digital Dermatology Programme

