

RefHelp e-Bulletin

Keeping you up to date with Lothian Referral Guidelines- for previous e-Bulletin issues see nhslothian.scot/RefHelp/News/ Issue 6-June 2022

Colorectal Cancer and qFIT testing

The new Colorectal Triage Interface Office is now up and running. Following the COVID pandemic the Colorectal Department have developed a new diagnostic pathway, using multiple quantitative faecal immunochemical tests (qFITs) for patients referred with a suspicion of Colorectal Cancer. This aims to rationalise available resources and stratify patients according to likelihood of serious pathology. The triage pathway incorporates symptoms, qFIT results and patient frailty and co-morbidity to determine the next step which may be colonoscopy, CT colonoscopy, out-patient consultation or no further investigations.

qFIT requests will be generated from Secondary Care and the results will be interpreted, and appropriate clinical action taken, by Secondary Care. Patients will be asked to submit at least 2 qFIT tests. Please encourage patients to complete and return these.



The pathway seeks to get the patients with the greatest likelihood of pathology to the most appropriate test. Those with lower risk symptoms and normal qFITs may be offered a CT minimal preparation (plain CT with oral preparation) to safety net. Patients with 2 negative qFITs AND low-risk symptoms are unlikely to undergo further tests. There are some limitations with the new pathway and these measures

may not detect all cancers (0.1%) and other diseases at an early stage. It has been devised to find gross abnormalities that need urgent intervention.

The final outcome of a set of tests will be communicated directly to patients by the triaging consultants and copied to the GP. Patients who have not completed the full set of investigations will be booked into a virtual clinic for the triaging consultant to assess the residual risk. See Colorectal Cancer

<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/colorectal/colorectal-cancer> for more information.

Paediatric Dietetics

The RefHelp Paediatric Dietetics page has been updated, and can be found here:

<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/Paediatric/PaediatricDietetics>

The Paediatric Dietetics team are able to review children who have difficulties including food allergy (including CMPA), faltering growth, and infants with nutrition related co-morbidity. If you're not sure whether



to refer or not then you can email the department first at
RHCYP.dietetics@nhslothian.scot.uk

The Paediatric Weight Management service is run separately. Details of the referral process are here:

<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/Pages/PaediatricWeightManagement.aspx>

We're now engaged in a substantial piece of work to review and expand the Paediatric Gastrointestinal pages.

Bladder and Bowel Nursing Team



The BBNT have a new page on RefHelp, detailing the support their service can offer to patients. They are a small team of nurses with specialist knowledge in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment and management of adult bladder and bowel dysfunction. Following assessment and diagnosis, they provide a treatment plan for patients on how to improve or resolve their symptoms. They accept referrals from

GPs and there is a link on RefHelp to the intranet page where the form can be downloaded

<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/Pages/BladderandBowelNurseTeam.aspx>.

The SCI Gateway referral will be up and running soon and we will let you know when that is in place.

Guest Writer – Megan M Reid

Hello! I am pleased to be given this opportunity to introduce myself and share a few reflections and asks.

I am the new programme manager for NHS Lothian's Outpatient Redesign Programme. My colleague Megan Bannister wrote about the programme in the last edition.

I took up the post at the end of March 2022 and it has been an insightful first 10 weeks and has been a pleasure meeting lots of new faces and learning even more healthcare acronyms!

My first reflection is that this is an ambitious programme, one I am looking forward to leading. The programme aims to improve the quality of care we deliver from point of referral into Secondary Care outpatient services through to discharge or ongoing management, valuing the experience of every patient.

My second reflection is that I appreciate the programme has had previous iterations, all achieving different things, and I believe going forward the programme has a lot more potential. We are at such a pivotal time in healthcare and I see the programme giving us the opportunity to improve patient pathways so we can work towards recovery and a degree of sustainability.

My third reflection is that delivering true improvement for patients and staff lies in viewing the patient journey as a whole and working together to deliver incremental change throughout it. We will not achieve true benefit by only updating referral guidance or updating TRAK systems or introducing text reminders. We need to review the entire pathway, keeping the good and updating the dated.

My first ask is that we maintain the relationships we have across Primary Care into Secondary Care specialties and that we work together on developing others. The team of RefHelp Advisors are critical to this so please reach out to them to discuss opportunities.

My second ask is to engage with us as we progress through the programme. As a programme we will be taking a specialty by specialty approach. We will keep you updated through our referrals advisors and RefHelp project team members on what we are working on and how to get involved.

My final ask is to keep engaging with our fantastic RefTalks series. We are about to take a summer break but will be returning in the autumn with a diverse range of topics and speakers.

With time I hope to get the opportunity to meet you so please do not hesitate to reach out to talk through any idea, no matter how developed it is. We have to start somewhere.

Midlothian Single Point of Access

The Midlothian Single Point of Access is now live on SCI Gateway. The Single Point of Access is currently open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. This service will liaise, within 24hrs if required, with Midlothian HSCP Intermediate Care Teams such as Rapid Response, Discharge to Assess, Community Respiratory Team, MSK Physiotherapy, Hospital at Home, Homecare, District Nurses, Duty Social Work and the Dementia Team.

New Arrhythmia and palpitations Ref Help Page

Smart devices, such as smart watches and smart rings can make patients aware of their heart rate and sensations more than ever before.



Palpitations are common and often frightening for the patient but most palpitations are benign, and patients are at low risk of serious cardiac events.

This reflects the most common causes - ectopic beats, sinus tachycardia and supraventricular arrhythmias.

A good history, examination and basic investigations can often separate out the benign from more sinister causes in most patients, without the need for ambulatory monitoring. However, it's also important to consider more serious causes & there is now a new [Arrhythmia and Palpitations](#) Ref Help page to help know when to refer.

RefHelp for Practice Nurses.

Much of the guidance on RefHelp is useful for Practice Nurses - particularly for conditions associated with chronic diseases managed in general practice. However, there is now a RefHelp page specifically for [long term conditions](#) (LTCs). It references house of care and other initiatives but also highlights services which should help patients needing additional support. So far these are all **Edinburgh only** and, for the majority, patients can self-refer:

[Self-management support](#) for those struggling to manage their condition or are isolated and would benefit from help with their emotional and physical health

[Fit for Health](#) - physical activity for those with a range of LTCs (including chronic pain)

[Grapevine disability service](#) for help with benefits and other issues

[Grapevine Community Respiratory Support Service](#) - disability and other advice for those with respiratory conditions including symptoms relating to long Covid.

There is also a suite of [Lothian cCBT options](#) for those with mild to moderate depression or anxiety who also have certain long-term conditions. The [infographic](#) gives a useful summary, including of some self-referral modules.

Please share with your Practice Nurse team and support our patients in self-management.

Perinatal Mental Health



Perinatal mental health has become even more important because of the effects of the pandemic. The [RefHelp advice](#) has been updated and we are in the process of creating a SCI Gateway pathway for referrals.

There is also a new [cCBT module on perinatal wellbeing](#) that will be useful for both parents and caregivers and can be accessed during pregnancy and for up to a year after birth.

Finally, there is a new suite of options being offered by the Maternity and Neonatal Psychological Intervention Service. Details have already been sent to practices and will be added to RefHelp soon.

Gender Identity

Pathways for gender identity services are being discussed both in Lothian and nationally which should result in new approaches being resourced and established. In the interim, GPs can view [Lothian prescribing advice on the intranet](#). The updated [gender identity RefHelp page](#) gives useful detail on changing CHI numbers, cancer and aortic aneurysm screening, gender-specific reference values and maintaining confidentiality. Please see the Primary Care Management section for full details.

Paediatric Orthopaedics

You might have already noticed that the Paediatric Orthopaedics pages have been extensively updated, thanks to the Orthopaedics team at the RHCYP. Special thanks to Moira-Jane Simpson & Emily Baird for their contribution in making this happen. We have also invited the team to arrange a presentation during one of our upcoming RefTalk events regarding the new update.

If you haven't already done so yet, please do have a look at the [paediatric orthopaedics](#) main page for useful information about diagnosis and management in Primary Care (including when to refer) before making a referral. Be sure to check the "resources and links" section for the relevant conditions as there are fantastic patient information leaflets there, including:

[Normal lower limb variants in childhood leaflet](#) which covers bowed legs (Genu Varum), Flat feet, in-toeing and out-toeing.

[Childhood Growing pains](#)

[Toe Walking](#) (Tip toe walkers)

[Sever's disease](#) (Heel pain)

[Osgood Schlatter Disease](#)



Parkinson's Disease

People with a recent diagnosis of Parkinson's disease or those who have already been diagnosed somewhere else, can be referred to the [Edinburgh Parkinson's Assessment Clinic](#)

(EPAC), for a multi-disciplinary assessment by OT, PT & SALT. You can email the referral to EPAC@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk. For further information, visit EPAC page on RefHelp under Rehabilitation> Neuro-rehabilitation

Podiatry

The podiatry team have updated their pages with a large amount of information. Some of the topics covered are: [diabetic painful peripheral neuropathy](#), [foot ulceration](#), [common skin & nail disorders](#) and Charcot Neuropathy management pathway. There is also a large section on [MSK Podiatry](#).

RefTalks - Spring Webinar 2022



The date for the next RefTalks Spring webinar is Monday 27th of June 2022 from 7:30-8:30pm. The topic is '*Menopause - Hot Topics for General Practice*'. The choice of topic was selected based on the most popular request we received from the post event surveys.

We are delighted to have the Chalmers Team - Dr. Sarah Hardman, Dr. Michelle Cooper, and Dr. Ellie Golightly share their valuable knowledge and insights about managing menopause in Primary Care and the webinar will cover an overview of current prescribing hot topics in menopause care, including managing common side effects of HRT, prescribing in women in higher risk groups eg increased breast cancer risk, increased VTE risk, micronised progesterone / Utrogestan and testosterone.

This is a perfect opportunity to discuss any queries you have about this hot topic with the experts themselves. So don't miss out... hurry up and register now!

Following the spring webinar, there will be a summer break in July and August. RefTalks will resume with interesting key speakers lined up for its Autumn Series from September to November 2022. You can follow us on Twitter [@RefHelp_Lothian](#) to get all the latest news about RefHelp & RefTalks!

Please note you can now view all the previous webinar recordings on our Archive section [here](#) and please send us your feedback and topic suggestions by filling out any one of the post event feedback forms or email any queries to REFHELP@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

RefHelp Impact - Secondary Care Survey

The RefHelp Impact Survey was distributed amongst secondary care clinicians and to know their feedback please check our latest news page here:

<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/News/Pages/RefHelp-Impact---Secondary-Care-Survey-Results.aspx>

Contributors to this issue were:

Dr Becky Cheesbrough, Dr Catriona Morton, Dr Jane Burnett, Dr Paul Bailey, Dr Mohammad Alshaikly, Megan M Reid & Aparna Amanna.

Was this useful and interesting? We would love to hear your feedback or suggestions for future updates and content! Email us at: RefHelp@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk or even send us a tweet [@RefHelp_Lothian](#)