

RefHelp e-Bulletin

Keeping you up to date with Lothian Referral Information- for previous e-Bulletin issues see [News](#) **Issue 8 Jan 2023**

RefHelp Migration

You may have noticed a few changes to RefHelp in the last couple of months. Firstly, the website migrated to a new platform, Sharepoint 2013 to WordPress, in October 2022. This was essential because Microsoft will no longer support Sharepoint beyond April 2023. The appearance of the new



site is slightly different, but the web team have tried to keep it as similar as possible. The new site has been built by the NHS Lothian web team and is bespoke to us. The functionality is mainly the same, but you may have spotted that the "Guidelines" tab is now on the right-hand side of the screen, and a few other changes.

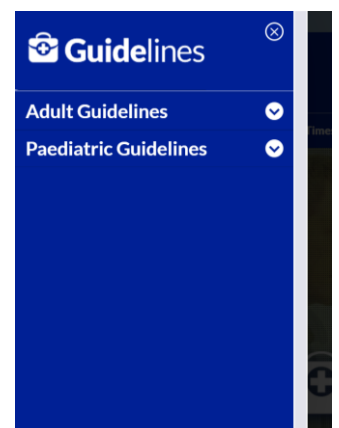
Secondly, the website was moved to a new server shortly after the migration.

Again, this was essential work and was done at a national level. Unfortunately, this has created some problems, particularly with broken links, and we are steadily trying to fix these although it's been a fairly long-winded process!

Thirdly, we decided to separate the guidelines on the site into "adult" and "paediatric" sections. We think this makes it easier to navigate the site but also reflects the increase in the amount of content we now have for paediatric specialties.

Our RefHelp colleagues, Heather Levy and Aparna Amanna, along with the NHS Lothian web team, have spent a huge amount of time working on the changes to the website and we are incredibly grateful to them.

We are also grateful to you, our users, for your patience and understanding over the last few months when there has been some disruption to the website and our response times have not been as speedy as we would like. We hope that we will be back to "business as usual" very soon! Let us know what you think of the "new look" and changes to the website and please let us now if you encounter any difficulties. Refhelp@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk



Changes to the RefHelp team

We are delighted to welcome Caroline Wiggins as the newest member of the RefHelp team. She joins us as a Referrals Advisor and brings both her expertise as a GP and interest in QI and research and safety.

We are very sorry to say goodbye to Nik Hirani who, in his role as AMD, has been a big supporter of RefHelp and our team. Nik is our guest writer in this issue - see below.

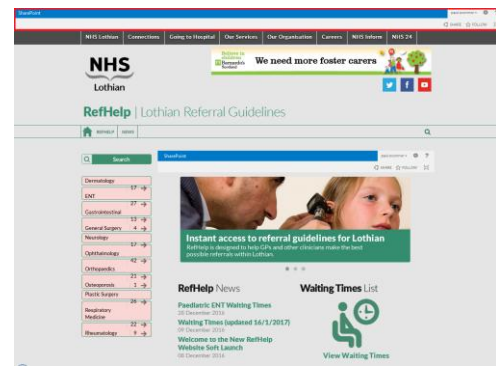
Guest Writer



Dr Nik Hirani

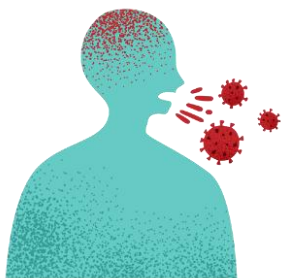
After just over 4 years I'm stepping down from my role as AMD, the remit for which included RefHelp. When I started I met the RefHelp clinical team, which wasn't a difficult meeting to convene as it comprised of one person (take a bow David Maxwell). Over many years David had curated what we now affectionately call 'Old RefHelp'. The philosophy was simple and hasn't required changing; concise readily available referral guidelines informed by evidence and expert opinion and bespoke to Lothian. Above all it was to be educational and informative.

I don't need to rehearse what has happened to the demand for healthcare services in just a short time since 2018, but I am only half-joking when I say that RefHelp is the only service that I'm associated with that isn't in a state of melt-down. Rather it's a blossoming resource that other health-boards are mimicking, the sincerest form of flattery. This is down to the ongoing stewardship of our burgeoning clinical and project team and support and feedback of our community of users. There are improvements that can and will be made, and the reach into all healthcare providers is not where we need it to be, but there's no requirement for Musk-style disruption. Most of all I hope that we would be allowed to continue to adhere to the principle that RefHelp is an educational resource that serves the user, not a tool that primarily aims to curb demand. I'm leaving it in good hands.



'Old' RefHelp

Infection Control!



This has certainly been our winter for infections! These have tended to be respiratory, but please see our new guidance on [Out Patient Antimicrobial Therapy \(OPAT\)](#):

The OPAT service allows admission to be avoided when someone needs intravenous (IV) antibiotics. Those could be for a spreading cellulitis not responding to first line oral treatment, or where IV antibiotics are needed because of UTI antibiotic resistance. OPAT now provides services both at the Western General and St John's, and the hope is to have a base in East Lothian

soon.

The OPAT service sets out to make referral as easy as possible for GPs and their patients: the team will phone your patient, they can help arrange transport, and for those who can manage, can teach patients how to give their own IVs!

SHINGLES and CHICKENPOX CONTACTS - involving vulnerable people.

Previously, pregnant women in contact with chickenpox, and who were non-immune, required immunoglobulin. Now there is new guidance recommending antivirals instead. Other vulnerable groups covered in the new guidance include the immunosuppressed and certain groups of children, especially neonates.

Please see the full guidance on our [Infectious Disease VZ post-exposure prophylaxis](#) page - and it also handily appears on the [Pregnancy](#) section of RefHelp too.



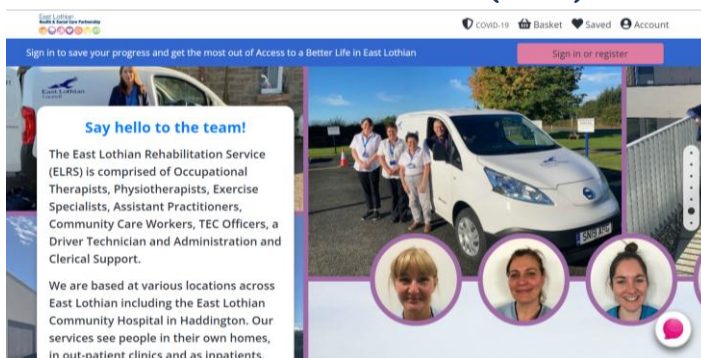
Paediatric Audiology

Children and young people can suffer from distressing tinnitus or sound sensitivity. RefHelp now has new [Paediatric Audiology](#) pages to help! Please note that 'hyperacusis' is an audiological diagnosis which can only be made following referral, and details of the condition are included in the [Sound Sensitivity](#) page.

The good news for children and young people with these symptoms, is that they are not usually associated with major pathology and tend to be self-limiting. The new Patient Information Leaflets should also help with initial self-management and include: [Tinnitus in Young People](#), [Sound Sensitivity in Children](#) and [Sound Sensitivity in Young People](#).

Rehabilitation:

East Lothian Rehabilitation Service (ELRS).



If you work in East Lothian, you will probably be familiar with East Lothian Rehabilitation Service (ELRS). This is an integrated Health and Social Care service made up of Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Assistant Practitioners, CCW's, Exercise Specialists and Telecare Technicians. Within ELRS, there are a number of pathways including Community Occupational Therapy,

Physiotherapy, Respiratory & Prevention of admission pathways. For Further information regarding these pathways and how to refer, please check [ELRS](#) page under the Rehabilitation section.

Oncology:

Cancer Navigation Hub

This is a phone-based service that has been developed to answer calls from patients and healthcare professionals covering all cancer related enquiries. The service will initially run for a 12 month trial period and will cover a selected number of cancer types (which have been selected for this trial), which are: Urology, Gynaecological, Head and Neck, Lung & Melanoma (skin). For further information please check [Cancer Navigation Hub](#) page under the Oncology section

Lothian Improving the Cancer Journey

The Lothian Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) Service is a Macmillan-funded, Link Worker service. ICJ aims to support people with a cancer diagnosis and their family or carers, focusing on non-clinical issues like money and housing, work, caring responsibilities, physical and emotional concerns. For



further information please check their [Improving the Cancer Journey page](#) under the Oncology section.

The newest recruit

Hello everyone, I'm Caroline Wiggins, a locum GP in Lothian. It's been great to start with the team recently and I am looking forward to contributing to the development of RefHelp which has been an invaluable resource to me for many years. I've been working primarily with Cardiology since starting the post and some of you may have noticed changes to a few of their pages, hopefully making these even more useful to Primary Care clinicians and easier to navigate. There's more to follow. RefHelp exists to help busy clinicians and our patients so if you've any feedback on aspects of RefHelp please get in touch using the "contact us" form on the website.

RefTalks - Winter Webinar 2023

We are excited to announce that the next series begins this February 2023 and the dates for the upcoming webinars are mentioned below. Topics & webinar details will be announced nearer the time.

RefHelp



Ref Talks

Winter Webinars

 7:30 - 8:30 PM, MS Teams

 28th February 2023

 29th March 2023

SAVE THE DATES!



 Topics and Registration Details will be published nearer time

We look forward to your continued participation at our future events and your valuable support in our efforts to provide a learning experience that is useful and high-quality!

Contributors to this issue were:

Dr Becky Cheesbrough, Dr Catriona Morton, Dr Mohammad Alshaikly, Dr Caroline Wiggins, Dr Nik Hirani & 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