‘Walk-In’ X-ray requests – Important Changes – Please cascade to all GPs
- Going ‘live’ on SCI Gateway on Monday, 11th February, 2013

- ‘Walk-In’ X-ray is defined as an X-ray ordered by a GP which does not require an appointment and is currently organised by giving the patient an X-ray card during a consultation, after which the patient goes to a nearby X-ray department.
- It is proposed that SCI Gateway should now be the usual way of making a referral for walk-in X-ray (but it is recognised that some GPs may continue to use the paper-based method).
- There are many reasons for this but the main ones are, patient safety and governance in terms of
  a) a proper record of this transaction being held at both ’sending’ and ’receiving’ ends, b) the creation of an audit trail to check if a patient has turned up for this X-ray c) the current paper based card sometimes gets lost or is illegible d) removal of transaction errors when clinical details are i) written on the card by the GP and ii) transferred from the patient card to the TRAK system e) speedier reporting of X-rays, benefitting both the patient and the GP f) automatic generation of X-ray results from TRAK which can be sent back electronically to the GP practice g) the patient will already be registered on the system on arrival, saving both the patient and the radiology staff time h) patient convenience – patient’s can attend ANY X-ray department in Lothian as the referral will be on TRAK and can be both accessed and reported at any geographic site. It is also easier for the GP as, a) most of the referral is filled in automatically, b) there is a ‘drop down’ list of all possible ‘walk-in’ X-ray investigations and c) a special ‘cut down’ Gateway referral form is used to save time.

Method

1. After a GP considers a ‘walk-in’ X-ray is required, then ideally at the consultation or, failing that, at the end of the surgery, a Gateway referral should be created and sent.
2. This will be much easier if a) the GP is already logged into Gateway (note that when ‘logged in’ once to Vision or EMIS, these systems thereafter ’remember’ the log-in details) and b) Referral for ‘Walk-in’ to the local X-Ray department is saved as a Gateway favourite (note, as mentioned above, the patient does not necessarily have to go to that specific department).
3. A special ‘cut-down’ ‘Walk-in’ Gateway X-ray referral proforma has been created to simplify the referral. This proforma is found under the locations (RIE, WGH, Leith CTC, SJH, Roodlands, Lauriston, RHSC & ML Community Hospital) then ‘Clinical Radiology’ then ‘L Radiology Walk In’
4. The referral proforma has all possible ‘walk-in’ X-Ray requests listed as a ‘drop down’ choice making it easier and more accurate for the GP to request the correct examination.
5. At the end of the consultation, the GP can either a) hand the patient the ‘Patient Information for X-ray’ card*, labelled with both the patient and practice details (the latter is necessary in case the X-ray department needs to contact the practice quickly). This step is essential as the patient needs a brief written summary of the information on the location and opening times of the X-Ray departments or b) print off the Gateway referral form (as well as sending it) and give the printed copy to the patient.
6. Please note that the GP does not need to write anything on the card, it is only necessary to simply affix the two ‘Labeltrace’ labels.
7. In spite of the many advantages of this system, it is acknowledged that a) the GP ideally needs to do this referral personally and b) this may not be possible during a consultation due to time constraints. In practised hands and using (2) above, the referral can be accomplished in about one to one and a half minutes and it is hoped that this can be accomplished either during a consultation or at the end of the surgery
8. If (7) is not accomplished then there is a real danger that the patient may turn up at the X-ray department before the referral has been received and since the patient will already be waiting at the X-ray department, the department will need to contact the practice urgently to speak to a GP to ratify the x-ray request (hence the practice label on the patient information form)
9. For this reason, there is text in the patient leaflet stating that where possible, the patient should wait 24 hours before attending unless the GP has sent in an urgent request. Obviously if it is an urgent request the GP will need to complete the referral urgently.
10. It is appreciated that completing a Gateway referral within the required time constraints may not be possible in some cases, in which case please complete a standard referral card and give this to the patient.