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## Introduction by Lindsey Barker Medical Director



Welcome to the May edition of GP Round Up.

This month I am pleased to let you know about our new clinical administration process that will come into effect on 6th July. I am aware of the delays that you sometimes experience when trying to contact individual departments and I believe the new system will make it quicker and easier for you to access them.

I would also like to invite you to our annual GP Consultant Workshop, the topics we have chosen will be relevant and helpful to your clinical practice so please try and send at least one GP from each surgery.

This edition also includes guidance on prescribing for renal transplant patients, updated radiology guidelines and information on new services for heart failure service, neurological patients with long term conditions and those with hearing impairment.

*This GP Round Up email newsletter is sent out to Practice Managers in the local area - please can you forward it on to the GPs in your surgery.*

## New Clinical Administration Teams

We are pleased to announce that the Trust is introducing a new clinical administration process that will improve telephone access for GPs and the turnaround of GP letters.

A phased implementation of the new process will take place throughout June and conclude on 3 July. The Patient Contact Centre will continue to work up until and including 3 July, after which the team will be stood down and absorbed into the new Clinical Administration Teams.

We will send you updated contact information in the near future but please continue to use the current telephone numbers and email addresses until further notice.

## GP Consultant Workshop 1st July

GPs are warmly invited to our annual GP Consultant Workshop on *1st July 12:30 - 16:30* at Reading University (Whitenights Campus).

The afternoon will begin with a joint GP/Consultant presentation about the *Furosemide Lounge* Joint Pathway Project.

You can then choose to attend any three of the following informal round table discussions, each one lead by a Consultant:

- *Prostate Cancer*
- *Headaches & Migraine*
- *Advances in total shoulder replacement*
- *Skin cancer recognition*
- *Paediatric Allergies*
- *Physiotherapy Referral Pathways*
- *Interface Geriatrics and the Acute Frailty Network*
- *Heart Failure*
- *Osteoporosis & Bone Health*

A sandwich lunch will be available from 12:30 before the main session begins at 13:00. There will be reserved parking for the event and certificates of attendance issued.

Please register your place by emailing to [caroline.hillman@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:caroline.hillman@royalberkshire.nhs.uk) or telephone 0118 322 5313.

## A new way of working with cardiac patients

An ambulatory service will go live on Wednesday 3rd June to treat heart failure patients. Eligible patients who require high dose IV Furosemide will be able to receive care as an out-patient rather than having to be admitted to hospital for treatment. The service will be based on Whitley Ward and managed between the Cardiology Consultants and Whitley team.

## Referrals to Adult Hearing Services

Several GPs have recently asked *"Why do I need to re-refer patients to the RBFT acute hearing service when I have already referred my patient via an AQP pathway?"*

All AQP referrals to RBFT that require acute onward referral will automatically transfer to our acute pathway and no new GP referral is required. However if the patient is referred to an alternative provider that cannot undertake acute work, and the patient displays acute symptoms, the AQP provider will have to send the patient back to the GP for onwards referral to an acute hearing or ENT service.

If you have any queries you can contact us either via email: [audiology@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:audiology@royalberkshire.nhs.uk), telephone: 0118 322 7238, fax: 0118 322 7075 or write to us at: Audiology 2, West Drive Buildings, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, London Road, Reading, RG15AN.

RBFT has provided an AQP pathway for Adult Hearing Services since 2013. Our service is *Improving Quality in Physiological Services (IQIPS)* accredited and we are one of a number of AQP providers locally. We are obliged to patients to contact their GP for referral for a hearing aid and cannot book them directly ourselves.

National guidance recommends a patient to be reassessed every 3 years (BAA, 2015). Patients currently undergoing treatment on an acute pathway do not require a new referral for a reassessment. A new referral to the acute service is only required if the patient is new to the area or the Trust.

We provide AQP and a variety of Acute Audiology Services at the following sites:

- Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading
- Royal Berkshire Bracknell HealthSpace (Brants Bridge).
- West Berkshire Hospital in Newbury.
- Wallingford Community Hospital.
- Townlands Hospital in Henley on Thames.
- Wokingham Hospital
- Wokingham Medical Centre
- Loddon Vale in Woodley
- The Boathouse Surgery in Pangbourne
- The Health Centre in Wantage
- Didcot Health Centre
- Falkland Surgery in Newbury
- Bell Surgery in Henley on Thames
- Brookside Surgery in Lower Earley

RBFT has a highly diverse Specialist Clinical Scientist-led service and for patients referred to our acute pathway, we provide specialist assessment and management services in:

- Tinnitus
- Hyperacusis
- Auditory Processing Disorders (APD)

- Adults with learning Difficulties
- Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA)
- Unilateral hearing losses requiring CROS/BiCROS fittings.
- Domiciliary services for housebound patients
- Hearing Therapy for specialist counselling services, including a Clinical Psychologist available for patients with multiple needs.
- Specialist Services for profound hearing losses/sign language users.

### Balance Clinic

A separate referral is required via ENT/GP for the Balance Clinics. Balance clinics are currently provided in Bracknell and Reading and see both BPPV and complex Vestibular Cases. We also have a complete Paediatric Assessment and Rehabilitation Service and are therefore able to easily Transition Patients into the Adult Service between the ages of 16-19.

There is a referral pro-forma for the Adult Services which may help to identify most patients who meet the AQP criteria and those who require assessment under an Acute Pathway or via ENT. The AQP referrals should only be used for:

- Patients over the age of 55 years.
- Symmetrical Hearing Loss
- Tinnitus lasting under 5 minutes and symmetrical.
- No Vertigo
- Does not require Domiciliary visits
- No ENT history.
- No APD/Hyperacusis
- No active ear infection
- No known mixed hearing loss
- No severe-profound/ski-slope hearing losses.
- No learning difficulties, blindness, dementia.

## Updated Radiology Guidelines

The Radiology Department have updated two guidelines for GPs: CT KUB access for GPs and Ultrasound referral guidelines can be downloaded at the following link: <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/radiology.htm>

## Occupational Therapy for Neurological Patients

Are you aware of the “One Stop Shop” Occupational Therapy Assessment & Review Service for patients with long term neurological conditions? Our OTs can offer patients advice, specialist hand splinting and assessment for equipment to support independence.

This outpatient OT clinic for neurological conditions sees patients with stroke, motor neurone

disease, multiple sclerosis and head injury at the *In Patient Therapies Unit* at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

**To refer to the service please fax or write to: *Occupational Therapy Neurology Out Patients, In Patient Therapies, Battle Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital RG1 5AN or Fax: 01183226704***

The Occupational Therapist has the skills to manufacture specialist splints to assist in the prevention of hand contractures following neurological events such as Stroke and Acquired Brain injury.

Spasticity and increased tone can be painful and cause difficulties with personal care and independence as hands may become tighter as spasticity develops.

The interventions from the Occupational therapist are aimed towards maintenance of daily function with all activities, equipment provision, education about self management and strategies to maintain independence and fatigue management along with signposting to external agencies and referring for carer support.

Evidence from a recent patient survey in this clinic indicated that all the respondents reported that the service had made either a good amount or a lot of difference to them. Of these the greatest reports were of increased comfort, being better informed about their condition; to self manage, easier to do things and less pain.

## Prescribing after a kidney transplant

The Renal Transplant Team has produced a guideline to assist GPs when prescribing for patients who are receiving immunosuppressive treatment following renal transplantation. Information on treating infections and hypertension as well as advice on contraception, cancer screening and vaccinations for travel, may be downloaded by following the link <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/renal.htm>

If you have any other queries please contact Claire Orme, Transplant nurse, Tel: 0118 322 8332, pager: 40593 or email to [Claire.Orme@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:Claire.Orme@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Alternatively you can get in touch with the Renal registrar, Tel: 0118 322 5111 (switchboard) Bleep 176

## Anticoagulation testing

The Anticoagulation Clinic regrets that it is unable to carry out a *formal* Coagucheck service due to the large numbers of patients within the service. We do understand that there is a small cohort of patients that require a Coagucheck facility. This small cohort will continue to be supported in self-testing; however the service cannot extend that support to self management.

## Delayed dermatology letters

You may be aware that we recently sent a backlog of gastroenterology letters to practices. The backlog occurred because of a miscommunication between internal RBFT systems. We now have strengthened error reporting services in place to stop this happening again. As a consequence of these new error reports, we subsequently discovered a small backlog of dermatology letters and we are now in the process of sending these out. We apologise that this is causing each practice additional work and also that the information is much delayed.

The current catch-up process for dermatology will be complete next week (w/c 1-Jun-2015). We are not sending the letters all at once as this could provide an individual practice with a large number of letters to deal with in a single batch. Additionally we wish to limit the impact that the catch-up may have on the delivery of all new letters currently being generated.

## GP pages on Trust website

The Trust website <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/> has a new layout and resources for GPs are all in one place under the blue “GP” tab <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/gps.htm> at the top of the main page. The following links may be found in the GP section:

- Directory of outpatient services <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/directory-of-services.htm>
- GP secure online resources <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/gp-secure-online-resources.htm>
- Clinical and referral guidelines <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/gp-referral-information.htm>
- Consultant directory <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/consultant-directory.htm>
- GP Newsletter <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/gp-newsletter.htm>
- Choose & Book <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/choose-and-book.htm>
- Continuing professional development for GPs <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/continuing-professional-development.htm>
- Patient information leaflets <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets/>
- Infection control information <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/infection-control-information.htm>
- How to raise a query or concern <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/how-to-raise-a-query-or-concern.htm>

## How to Raise a Query or Concern

We welcome feedback from GPs and Practice Managers, so please let us know if you experience any problems with our services by sending a secure email to [gpliaison.rbft@nhs.net](mailto:gpliaison.rbft@nhs.net). Alternatively you can telephone Caroline Hillman GP Liaison Manager on 0118 322 5313. We will acknowledge your concern within 3 working days.

If a GP wishes to raise a formal complaint, this should be made in writing (by letter or email) to Lindsey Barker Medical Director. Alternatively, if the complaint is of a sensitive nature, the GP may prefer to telephone or speak to Lindsey in person.

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Team (PALS) focus on providing support and on the spot help to patients, relatives and carers and can be contacted via [talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk) The PALS Team also investigate serious patient complaints.