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### Introduction by Dr Lindsey Barker Medical Director

Welcome to the November edition of GP Round Up from the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.



This month I am delighted to let you know about the introduction of Saturday morning orthopaedic clinics at RBH. This is one of several actions we are taking to minimise the impact of winter pressures on our elective patients. Please let your patients know that **hip and knee referrals to RBH can now be seen in 9 days** although the wait may be slightly longer at other locations. The same patient can then expect to wait between **3- 4 weeks for their surgery** in our new state of the art elective orthopaedic facility.

In this newsletter articles are grouped under the following headings:

- [Trust headline news](#)
- [Clinical guidelines and referral advice](#)
- [Welcoming new consultants](#)

*Please note we are sending GP Round Up directly to GPs and practice managers in your surgery.*

## Trust headlines

### ***Increasing T&O new appointments and ED winter staffing***

#### Extra Orthopaedic Clinics

We will be holding Saturday orthopaedic clinics throughout November and December to maximise capacity and ensure that the patient wait for a first appointment is as short as possible. Latest waiting time information for orthopaedic referrals is available in a [separate article](#) and bookings can be made via the e-Referral (C&B) service. We are keen to receive referrals and work with our GP's to ensure that the services we provide meet the needs of our local community.

Please *email* [nick.prentice@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:nick.prentice@royalberkshire.nhs.uk) or call 0118-3226660 if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns.

#### Emergency winter pressures

The Trust has received confirmation of winter funding. The news that we are able to recruit additional staff to cover the winter period is welcome. Our Emergency Department (ED) has been under huge pressure recently with attendances regularly above 300 per day. Staff are working very hard to cope with the high number of patients coming to the hospital and we are struggling to consistently meet the 4 hour standard.

We also have a range of non-financial measures to strengthen our winter plan. We will scrutinise individual patients' treatment plans more closely on a daily basis and chase up actions to speed up diagnosis and treatment. We will increase the utilisation of the discharge lounge to speed up turnaround once beds become vacant. We are also escalating more regularly with outside agencies to move medically fit patients to the care they need outside hospital.

### ***More elective orthopaedic pathway improvements***

We are delighted that our new state of the art facility is increasingly busy. In the month of September the department of Trauma and Orthopaedics had 262 day cases pass through our Redlands theatres and 149 inpatients. We have received positive feedback from patients including:

*Mr A wrote to one of our consultants recently to say*

***"Thank you for your tremendous skill performing my discectomy operation at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Your talent and caring manner as well as the rest of the team is a credit to the medical profession. For me, you truly represented a life changing procedure and I am glad to say I seem to be recovering very well – I can walk and climb stairs again where prior to you operating on me I was paralysed."***

*Another patient writes*

***"Thank you for giving me a new lease of life by operating on my back."***

Building on this success, we have several new projects in the pipeline to improve the whole elective patient pathway from referral to discharge. This will enable us to work towards a “see and treat” model of delivery. We will involve GPs, patients, carers and relatives in the following planned service improvements:

- Bespoke personalised pathways and community based pre-assessment interventions
- More patient friendly outpatient environment
- Improve the process to check in and out and introduce a system whereby patients have the whole pathway dated and agreed before they leave the site
- Involve GPs, patients, carers and relatives in our T&O service improvements
- GP link events to include training and knowledge sharing

If you have any suggestions to enable our orthopaedic team to connect with your practice staff more effectively, please email on [nick.prentice@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:nick.prentice@royalberkshire.nhs.uk) or call 0118-3226660

### ***Working with the Ambulance Service to deliver a Falls and Frailty Service***



At the beginning of September, Spencer Winch a SCAS specialist paramedic started a 1 year project with an RBH Occupational Therapist supporting rapid response intervention for Frail Elderly falls patients.

Spencer works a 12 hour Saturday shift with the Occupational Therapist. Together they visit patients at home and so far their interventions have included - provision of mobility equipment and other aids to independence, pendant lifeline alarms, referrals for rapid response care, RACOP, Falls clinic and onward sign posting for home adaptations and support to prevent unnecessary admissions to hospital.

### ***RBFT Cardiology Echo Service gains accreditation***

Patients requiring cardiology investigations are in safe hands at The Royal Berkshire Hospital, after the Echocardiography Department received a national accreditation. The Royal Berks echo service is the only one in the local counties to have been awarded this accreditation, and one of less than 40 across the whole country. Echocardiograms are used to check how patients’ hearts are functioning, and help doctors decide on the best form of treatment from medication to surgery. The British Society of Echocardiography accreditation is awarded to departments where the facilities, equipment, quality of service and staff meet nationally agreed standards. The team has 10 physiologists, who perform most of the scans, 4 cardiologists and 1 nurse.

Sue Westlake, Principal Physiologist, said: “We’re absolutely delighted to have this accreditation. It’s recognition of years of hard work from the team to ensure that we met every strict standard set by the British Society of Echocardiography and deliver the excellent service our patients deserve.”

## Clinical guidelines & referral advice

In this section we update you on new clinical guidelines and outpatient referral advice. A comprehensive list of clinical and referral guidelines can be found in the GP section of the trust website.

### *Latest orthopaedic waiting times*

	First available outpatient slot				Elective
	RBH	Bracknell	WBCH	Townlands	
Hip and Knee	9 days	44 days	12 days	30 days	3.3 weeks
Shoulder Service	13 days	38 days	N/A	55 days	3.5 weeks
Foot and Ankle	18 days	33 days	15 days	22 days	2.2 weeks
Hand Service	19 days	N/A	55 days	17 days	3.8 weeks
Spinal Service	13 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	3.3 weeks

### *Dingley Specialist Children's Centre OT referrals*

The Paediatric OTs have designed a new referral form to make it quicker and easier for GPs to refer to the service. It will also reduce their triaging time and free up more time to see patients. We are asking that everyone (G.P's and Paediatricians) make referrals to Dingley OTs using this new form so that the team can gather accurate information about the need for patient input. Please find a copy of the form as a separate attachment.

If you have any queries please get in touch with *Amy-Jayne Simmonds Paediatric Occupational Therapist Dingley Specialist Children's Centre tel 0118 322 5366*

### *New anaesthetic guidelines for elective surgery*

We would like to let you know that new guidelines are expected from the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland that could result in more patients having their surgery postponed in the coming months. Common reasons why we currently need to postpone patients are anaemia and poorly controlled chronic conditions such as diabetes and hypertension.

Poorly controlled diabetes is one of the main conditions that is likely to result in more patients having their surgery postponed in the coming months up to 3% of surgical patients with poorly controlled diabetes could be affected. This equates to nearly 1000 patients per year.

Our preoperative assessment team would like to hear from any GPs who can work with us to

address the new guidelines going forward. We will include more detailed information about the new guidelines in the next edition if available.

Please feel free to get in touch with Dr Jennie Rechner Consultant Anaesthetist [Jennie.Rechner@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:Jennie.Rechner@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

## Welcoming new consultants

I am pleased to introduce Miss Nicola Dunne Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon who has recently joined the Trust.

Prior to joining our breast team Miss Dunne trained in the Oxford region as a registrar and spent the last year as a national Oncoplastic Fellow in Sheffield. Miss Dunne has breast reconstruction clinics at the RBH Monday morning alternate weeks, Joint breast cancer clinics alternate Tuesday mornings , Rapid access clinics Wednesday morning and routine clinics on Friday morning.

If you would like to refer your patients to Miss Dunne all new slots can be found on CAB. If you require any further information about how to refer into the Breast Team at the RBH please get in touch with Breast Surgery Clinical Admin Team: Telephone 0118 322 6890 or email to [rbb-tr.CAT3@nhs.net](mailto:rbb-tr.CAT3@nhs.net)

Recently we have also welcomed several other new Consultants including:

Name	Speciality	Start date
James Briggs	Clinical Radiology	21-Sep-2015
Jyothis George	Endocrinology and Diabetes	01-Nov-2015
Dana Kelly	Anaesthetics	14-Sep-2015
Laila Salhani-Maat	Elderly Care Medicine	05-Oct-2015

## 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.