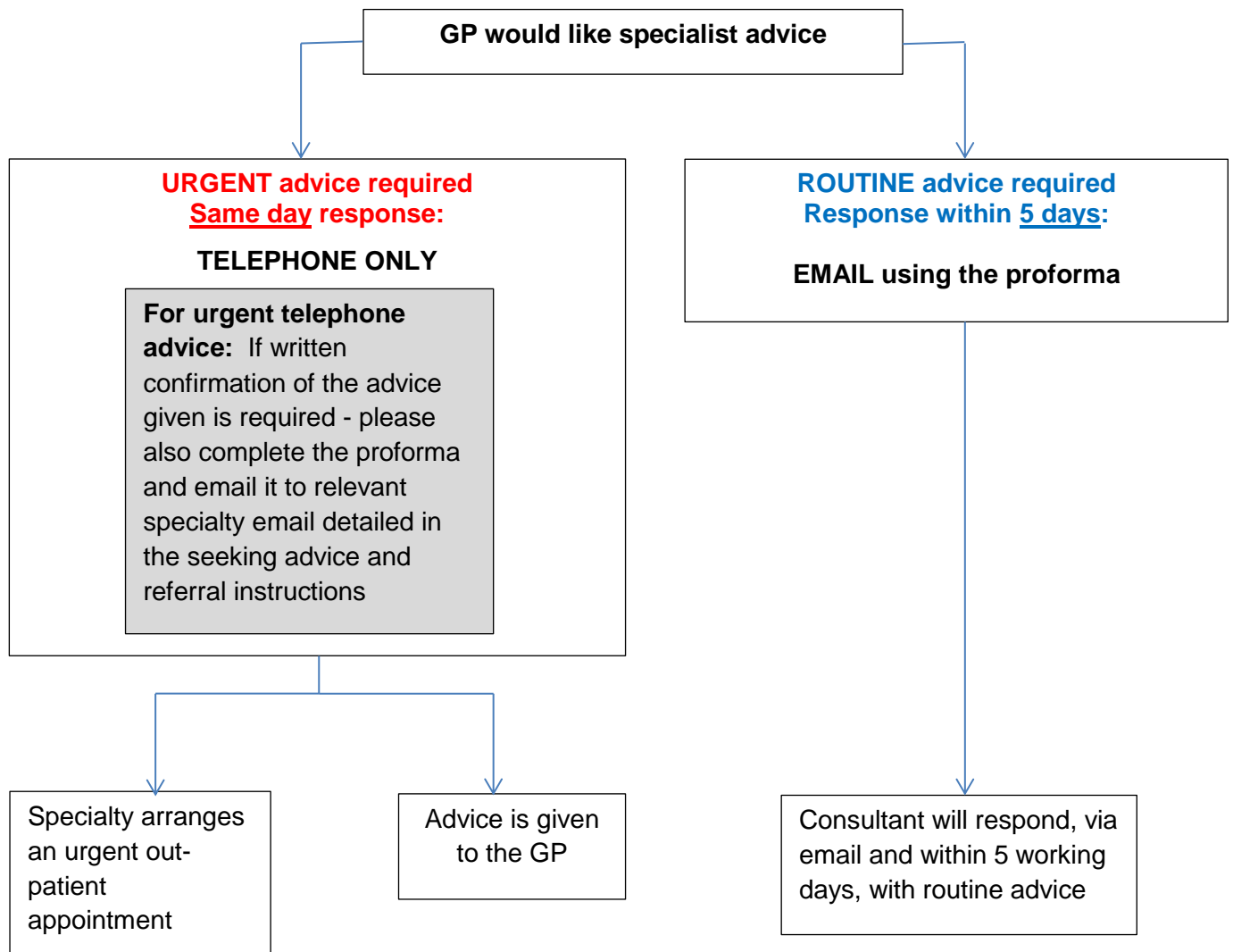


Seeking advice from Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

This guidance covers the process for “seeking advice”.

GPs are reminded to be aware that this process will form part of the patient’s official medical record, therefore all communication needs to be appropriate and relevant to the particular patient query.

Map of seeking advice process



Advice not suitable or red flags

If advice is not suitable for this patient and a face to face appointment is specifically required please refer this patient through e-Referral in the normal way using the [seeking advice and referral form](#).

We would be grateful if you could include details of why this patient would not be suitable for advice on the form.

Cancer 2 week waits

The advice route is not appropriate when the GP has a strong suspicion of cancer and the usual 2 week wait process should be used. However it could potentially be used to guide investigation and management where suspicion is low but not zero.

Frequently asked questions

1. Can I choose to refer without seeking advice?

If advice is not suitable for this patient and a face to face appointment is specifically required please refer this patient through e-Referral in the usual way.

We would be grateful if you could include details of why this patient would not be suitable for advice on the form.

2. How many requests for seeking advice for the same patient for the same condition is deemed appropriate?

It will depend on the patient and condition, so if the advice represents valuable management plans then there isn't a specific limit, however if you feel the advice is no longer helping you should choose to refer the patient.

3. What tests will we be expected to do?

As part of the specialty advice response GPs may be asked to arrange and act on results of investigations. These tests will be within GPs normal practice. If the patient is going to remain within primary care then responsibility for communicating and acting on results should remain with the GP. If the patient is going to be seen by a Specialist, the specialist should arrange any investigations required to be done before the appointment and should have responsibility for acting on results. If a GP has been requested to manage a test and feels that interpretation of this test is outside their competence they should inform the specialist who will then take the responsibility.

4. Which form do I use?

The form used for the neurology pilot has been amalgamated with the current DRSS referral template. Therefore the same form can be used for seeking advice or referring. The form has been provided to practices for importing into your practice clinical systems.

5. What about patient choice?

The seeking advice process will not affect or change patients' legal right to be able to choose where they can go for their first outpatient appointment. If your advice request is

converted into an e-Referral or you believe a face to face appointment is specifically required please refer this patient through e-Referral in the usual way using the seeking advice and referral form. When the patient contacts Devon Referral Support Services they will still be offered a choice of providers.

Seeking advice and Referral instructions

Urgent advice required (same day response):

- GP to telephone relevant specialty using the numbers listed in the table below
- If written confirmation of the advice given is required - please also complete the proforma and email it to relevant specialty email address listed in the table below
- Practice admin to team to ensure advice received is added to patient's medical record

Routine advice request (5 day response):

- GP to dictate or type advice required
- Practice admin team to populate template selecting "ROUTINE ADVICE REQUEST (5 day response)" option
- Practice admin team to forward form onto relevant specialty using the email address provided in the table below
- Practice admin team to ensure form is added to patient's medical record

Specialty advice response received instructions:

- Practice admin team to monitor generic email address for responses
- To share any response with relevant GP for action
- If specialist requests the form be converted into an e-Referral – use the same form and follow the e-Referral service selection process.
- Please note if the advice form has been converted into a referral it is the practices responsibility to advise the patient to expect referral paperwork
- Practice admin team to ensure advice received is added to patient's medical record

E-Referral:

- GP to dictate or type referral required
- Please state why this patient is not suitable for the advice service
- Practice admin team to populate template selecting the "E-REFERRAL" option
- Follow the e-Referral process for selecting the relevant specialty, clinic and service
- Please note – patient choice for an outpatient appointment will still be offered to the patient when they contact DRSS
- Practice admin team to ensure form is added to patient's medical record

Specialty contacts for seeking advice:

Specialty	Urgent - Telephone	Routine - Emails
Rheumatology	01803 654939	rheumatology.sdhct@nhs.net
Endocrinology	07900 303338	sdhct.endocrinology@nhs.net
Gastroenterology	07917 071466 or #6003	sdhct.gastroenterology@nhs.net
Haematology	07867 900879	sdhct.haematology@nhs.net
Diabetes	07900 303338	sdhct.diabetes@nhs.net
ENT	01803 614567 – ask for Consultant on call	sdhct.ent@nhs.net
Respiratory	01803 614567 – ask for Consultant on call	sdhct.respiratorymedicine@nhs.net
Neurology	01803 654827	sdhct.neurology@nhs.net
Urology	01803 654806	sdhct.urology@nhs.net
Colorectal	01803 656253	sdhct.colorectalsurgery@nhs.net
Vascular	01803 654154	sdhct.vascularsurgery@nhs.net
Pain Management	01803 654270/654251	sdhct.painmanagement@nhs.net
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	01803 655931	sdhct.GynaeSecretaries@nhs.net
Paediatrics	07584 272641 or 07825 14452	Paedsdictation.sdhct@nhs.net
Orthopaedics:	Orthopaedics do not have a Hot Phone and have requested the below consultant secretary numbers be used for urgent advice:	sdhct.tando@nhs.net
Hands/Knees <i>Paul Birdsall/David Isaac</i>	01803 654905	
Hips/Feet/Young adult <i>Steve Blake/Tom Ball/Peter Cox</i>	01803 654836	
Shoulders/Hip & Knee <i>Richard Hawken/Shah Punwar/Mike Hunt</i>	01803 654793	
Foot & Ankle <i>Guy Wansbrough/Patrick Loxdale</i>	01803 654849	
Shoulders <i>Veronica Conboy</i>	01803 654841	
Knees <i>Mike Hockings</i>	01803 654851	
Knees/Shoulders <i>Rob Lofthouse/Raju Ramesh</i>	01803 656196	
Revision Hip/Hip <i>Mark Ashworth/Gordon Higgins</i>	01803 654969	
Foot & Ankle <i>James Davis</i>	01803 655524	

[Seeking advice Referral form](#)

Supporting Information

This guideline has been signed off by South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group.

- Dr Rob Dyer – Medical Director for Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- Dr Eileen Deakin – GP and Clinical Lead, South Devon and Torbay CCG
- Bev Parker – Head of Planned Care Commissioning, South Devon and Torbay CCG

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