FYI Friday

**Update on MSK Services in Southampton**

Solent NHS Trust continue to provide a specialist community MSK service in Southampton and all Lower Limb MSK Referrals should be directed through this service as previously mandated. Upper Limb and Spinal MSK referrals are not currently mandated to be referred through this service, however, Solent Community MSK Service remains an option for these referrals too, with the Wessex Spinal Network’s recommendation that all Spinal patients be referred to this service in the absence of any red flags.

We understand the significant concerns about the waiting times for physiotherapy and the impact this will be having on our primary care colleagues. Solent are working hard to improve these. Current improvement actions being undertaken include:

* Continue to ensure that urgent patients are seen within two weeks.
* Increase in estates footprint to accommodate additional staff and activity at Tannersbrook Ward, from Monday 4th April for a period of six months.
* Recruitment of staff to address additional demand resulting from changes in pathways.
* Solent are also attempting to source medium-term locums to address the backlog following not being able to source additional capacity locally.
* Patient engagement for those on the waiting list to ensure these are kept up to date on the waiting times and that those in urgent need of help are channelled appropriately. Audits so far have confirmed that there are not any urgent referrals on the waiting list and those waiting remain routine cases.
* Identification of areas for transformational change through staff focus groups, communication and service project meetings. As with all transformational work the impact is likely to felt in the longer term than the shorter term.
* Re-triage specialist waiting list to refer appropriate patients to secondary care, making use of capacity within the Independent Sector.

Solent will also be carrying out the following improvement actions in the coming year:

* Improvement of Solent website ([www.solentmsk.nhs.uk](http://www.solentmsk.nhs.uk)).
* Changes to physiotherapy self-referral form and process to be updated making these clearer on expectations, allowing patients to be accurately triaged to the person who can best address their issue.
* Greater use of MSK-HQ – develop online version to clarify goals and expectations ahead of appointment.
* Revisit Shared Decision-making skills to improve efficiency and sharpen outcomes to accommodate the increase in IMAT referrals.
* Develop community links and explore collaboration opportunities e.g. Active Options and self-management programmes, Steps to Wellbeing and the development of Escape Pain provision.
* Develop evidence-based class options within service for patient care.
* Streamline internal processes within wider MSK service including links to the First Contact Practitioners.