



# Update on our Hampshire and Isle of Wight Teledermatology Service

**We would like to thank you for your continued support in delivering Teledermatology across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We are grateful and proud to announce that as result of your involvement, the majority of requests for dermatological advice are now being accompanied by detailed photographs.**

**All patients received via a teledermatology referral are reviewed promptly, and as a result patient waiting times for diagnosis and management plans have significantly reduced.**

**This change in process has also helped reduce the number of repeat consultations in primary care for the same problem, as advice is given in a timely fashion.**



# Your feedback

To help us improve the design of our services, a survey was sent to primary care referrers to evaluate their experience of using the Teledermatology Specialist Advice and Guidance (A&G) Service. We received 52 responses; of which the majority were from GPs. The feedback we received showed;

1. 88% reported they were often or always satisfied with the A&G service.
2. 84% found the information received from the service was helpful in managing their patients.
3. 75% reported receiving quick and timely responses (<3 days) from the dermatology team.
4. 80% agreed or strongly agreed the A&G service helped improve their knowledge, referral rates, and confidence in treating skin conditions.
5. 78% reported they were able to act upon the A&G replies (i.e. implement treatment plans, discussing with patient) in a timely manner.

## **Specific comments in letters from GP's in appreciation of the Advice & Guidance received:**

"... your advice was excellent, very helpful and very promptly delivered. This is definitely the way forward. We could only hope that other teams would be as good as you are, as this definitely makes our work much easier, much more effective and the thing to do in the future. Yes, so carry on, particularly the way you have been doing, with us providing photos and you replying; this definitely has a lot of benefit to it".

"Many thanks for your really helpful response to my A&G query".

"I think taking good and clear pictures is key in this process and is quite easily learnt and done. Overall the process is simple, easy and efficient. It has helped greatly with timely management of patients."

## **Specific comment from hospital consultant to GP in appreciation of quality of referral:**

"Thank you for your excellent teledermatology referral on this lady who does indeed appear to have a seborrheic keratosis on her forehead. Thanks to the quality of your referral letter and photo and dermoscopic photo I have been able to diagnosis a seborrheic keratosis with confidence and the usual standard letter has been sent to the patient and a copy to your practice. This letter is just an extra to say Thank you!"

## **Comments from patients about the direct-to-surgery pathway that has been made possible by teledermatology triage:**

"Very professional and excellent care"

"Very quick service from diagnosis to clinical treatment. Very competent and efficient clinical team. Very friendly and very good communication within the team and with me".

"Excellent job done".

# Tips for taking photos

For those of you who are just getting into taking images for Teledermatology, or even for those who are experienced, we have put together 7 short tips for providing images:

- 1** Take an establishing (locating) view & close up view
  - Always take an establishing image to identify which part of the body you are photographing
  - Then take a close-up image or a series of close-up images.
- 2** Take more than one image
  - When taking the key photograph the camera needs to be parallel to the lesion. Consider taking any additional image views for example an oblique angle or a side view for a raised lesion.
- 3** Use a background
  - Backgrounds should be plain and unobtrusive providing no distraction from the area of interest. A background is only needed if the subject area does not fully fill the frame.
- 4** For standard images always use the couch or treatment room examination light, or your mobile phone light. This is not needed for dermatoscope images.
- 5** Auto focus on the lesion and zoom in and check the focus
  - Before taking a picture make sure that the auto focus is fixed on the lesion of interest
  - If you are struggling to ensure the camera is focussing on the lesion include a measuring scale in the same plane of focus as the lesion
  - Your images must be sharp as possible if they are going to enable the dermatologist to make a diagnosis.
- 6** Please add a dermoscopic photo where possible, particularly for pigmented lesions.
  - Remember that you don't need to interpret the dermoscopic photo – the hospital dermatology teams will do that!
- 7** Patient-taken photos may not be of sufficient quality to enable a diagnosis, and of course won't include a dermoscopic photo. If the patient-taken photos are clear with location and close-up, they may be suitable. If in doubt, we really appreciate it if the photos can be re-taken in your practice.

**Watch our film on taking images, read our top tips, and find out more here:**

**[wessexcanceralliance.nhs.uk/teledermatology/](https://wessexcanceralliance.nhs.uk/teledermatology/)**