

April 2021



Dr Sarah Humphery

HELLO

Spring is here, flowers are out, and sun is too at times. COVID-19 is here but at least numbers are down.

We are working tirelessly at Whittington Health on our waiting lists and resuming normal services as much as possible, as quickly as possible. We appreciate your patience with so much change and having to adapt during these unprecedented times.

MSK Update

As a result of the second surge in COVID-19 cases, most Musculoskeletal (MSK) service staff were redeployed to support other services including ITU, wards, community rehabilitation, district nursing and the housebound and care home vaccination programme.

The service was paused for routine work in line with national guidance. During this time, we have continued with the essential/urgent MSK service, triaging all referrals and reviewing urgent patients within two weeks of referral. The team is now returning to MSK services and we are re-opening our routine virtual clinics (telephone or video consultation). If patients are clinically indicated for a face-to-face appointment, they will be risk-assessed prior to attending.

As a result of the service pause, we have a large number of patients awaiting an appointment. Waiting times are approximately 3 months while we work hard to catch up. To manage this, we are working with Camden MSK to enable a small proportion of straightforward referrals to be seen more promptly. All referrals that were on hold will be

processed and patients will be contacted in due course to book an appointment, therefore please avoid re-referral and duplication.

There is not the capacity, given the large number of MSK referrals (70,000 per annum), to acknowledge each referral individually. Please do give patients the patient information leaflet on the MSK referral form so they can contact us directly if they don't hear within 8 weeks: www.whittington.nhs.uk/msk

Post COVID-19 Update

There is now a referral form, [template and questionnaire available on EMIS](#). There are MDT's that GP's can book into/dial into and discuss patients with the Post COVID-19 Specialists (consultants, Physio, OT, IAPT). We are hoping to trial the UCLP App to support patients and we are piloting a Post COVID-19 EPP (expert patient programme).

We also recommend signposting your patients to the [Your COVID-19 Recovery](#) webpage to support self-care.

Reminder: Urgent & Emergency Referral Guidance – Helping us to help your Patients

We ask that GPs do not send patients to our Emergency Department without a referral. To support you in ensuring that you can quickly and easily make the appropriate referral, our Emergency Department has put together a really useful one pager for how to refer emergencies to us.

You can view it by visiting www.whittington.nhs.uk/emergencyreferrals.

Cervical screening: counselling and results

There have been examples of women, sent their abnormal cervical screen result and an appointment for a colposcopy via the National System (CSAS), being unaware of why they have been referred and it can lead to raised anxiety and dissatisfaction. The woman may contact the colposcopy clinic who must then ask them to speak to their GP practice.

We want to make sure that women are consistently well informed about the importance of having a cervical smear and what will happen next when the results are sent to her.

The counselling a woman receives by the smear taker is vital in preparation for her results especially if abnormal. We want to make sure consistent information and discussions are had with each woman at her cervical screen appointment.

We recognise that for the majority of women this counselling is happening but to make sure there is a consistent message.

We are recommending all women being offered and booked for a cervical screen should be sent the link to the [PHE Cervical screening leaflet](#), which is [also available in other languages](#). Further information is available [at the Jo's Trust website](#).

Thank you for raising this with your practice staff and I have attached the really useful most recent sample takers update.

Phlebotomy Services

We are aware that the combination of having to comply with all infection prevention and control guidance and not being able to offer a walk-in service for blood tests has affected capacity and the ease with which blood tests can be arranged.

Therefore, we have recently increased our capacity and made it possible for appointments to be booked up 2 weeks in advance.

We are sorry that having to book appointments for patients or give them details of how to book via eRS is time consuming for GP practice staff. We are looking into the options to improve this and also how to offer some urgent slots. We will let you know when we have further developments

Adult Community Services restructure

Community services continue to receive referrals and services which were on pause are now getting back to seeing patients virtually initially but once all restrictions lift then clinics will restart face to face.

I have attached the new structure chart for ACS adult community services showing some recent new appointments which we are pleased to announce.

Maternity News: Launch of 2 new Continuity of Carer teams

Whittington Health is very excited to announce the launch of two new midwifery teams. Sunflower Team will be based in Islington looking after N5 and N7 women and Acorn Team will be based in East Haringey.

These teams will provide antenatal, intrapartum and post-natal continuity of carer to our most vulnerable women, with the aim to improve satisfaction and outcomes for them and their families. The launch date 5th May 2021 – international day of the midwife!

This will give more individualised care, where mutual respect has been built in line with the governments agenda for delivering Better Births.



This is Cherelle and her new baby girl who was born on 12th April 2021, weighing in at a healthy 3.118kg. Cherelle is our first lady to have received CoC ahead of the official launch and has been cared for by Nikola Duncan her named midwife who has been beside her throughout her pregnancy, birth and will continue to see Cherelle at home.

Leanne Donlevy is our Continuity of Carer Lead: leanne.donlevy@nhs.net.

Thank you for all your ongoing support for Whittington Health

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