

Dear GP

Colorectal TWR telephone assessment service at St. George's Hospital

The Colorectal Team at St. George's are beginning a new service on the 27th July 2016, which involves a redesign of the way 2 week wait colorectal referrals from GPs are managed. The 'Colorectal Telephone Assessment Service' is being implemented in an attempt to modernise and streamline the referral system for patients with colorectal symptoms. This will initially be trialled on a single clinic basis but if successful, will be increased over the coming months.

The service is part of a national 'Straight to Test' initiative and will enable patients to be seen in the most appropriate place in a more timely fashion, creating time to be spent with them once a diagnosis has been made. We anticipate that within time we will be able to offer all our patients a first contact with the hospital within two weeks. The new service will also help us meet the Department of Health target that all patients with bowel cancer should be treated within 62 days of referral by their GP.

Please see the attached document, which provides a summary of the pathway.

The most important role that GPs can play in helping to make this pathway a success is to include vital information in the 2ww colorectal referral. Much of this information is now included on the new TWR referral forms:

- Is the patient unsuitable for a telephone assessment (ie hard of hearing, does not speak English, learning difficulties, very frail and elderly, has specifically requested a face to face appointment, doesn't have a telephone!)?
- Results of all recent relevant blood test, INC: FBC, ferritin, iron studies, eGFR & creatinine
- Results of abdominal and PR examination done in surgery
- Has your patient already had recent bowel investigations?
- PMH and list of all current prescription medication

The following will form part of our assessment but it would very helpful to know in advance your assessment of the following:

- In your opinion is the patient fit enough for bowel prep at home?
- Patient's social situation - ie do they live alone, local support
- Patient's state of mobility

All Colorectal 2ww referrals can now be referred to the TWR office at St. George's and some patients may be offered a telephone assessment appointment which may lead direct to a test/investigation.

Following GP referral, the patient will be telephoned from the appointed telephone clinic, an assessment made on the phone and investigations initiated. The results of these will then be reviewed and the most appropriate plan made for the patient. The referrer and the patient are involved and consulted throughout the whole process.

Direct to Test Protocol for Colorectal cancer TWR Referrals at St. George's Hospital

