

e-Referral Service

Standard Operating Procedure

Paper Switch Off Referral Return Process

1 Purpose/Objective

- This document describes the referral return process for SWFT as part of the paper switch off for the NHS e-Referral Service (e-RS);
- This document outlines contingency arrangements if there are technical issues with e-RS.

2 Audience

- This document applies to all staff within SWFT who process, receive and book referrals from GPs into Consultant Led Services.
- This SOP applies to SWFT following a paper switch off programme in line with the locally mandated switch off date 1st August 2018, when routine referrals made through other means will not be processed.

3 Background - Paper Switch Off

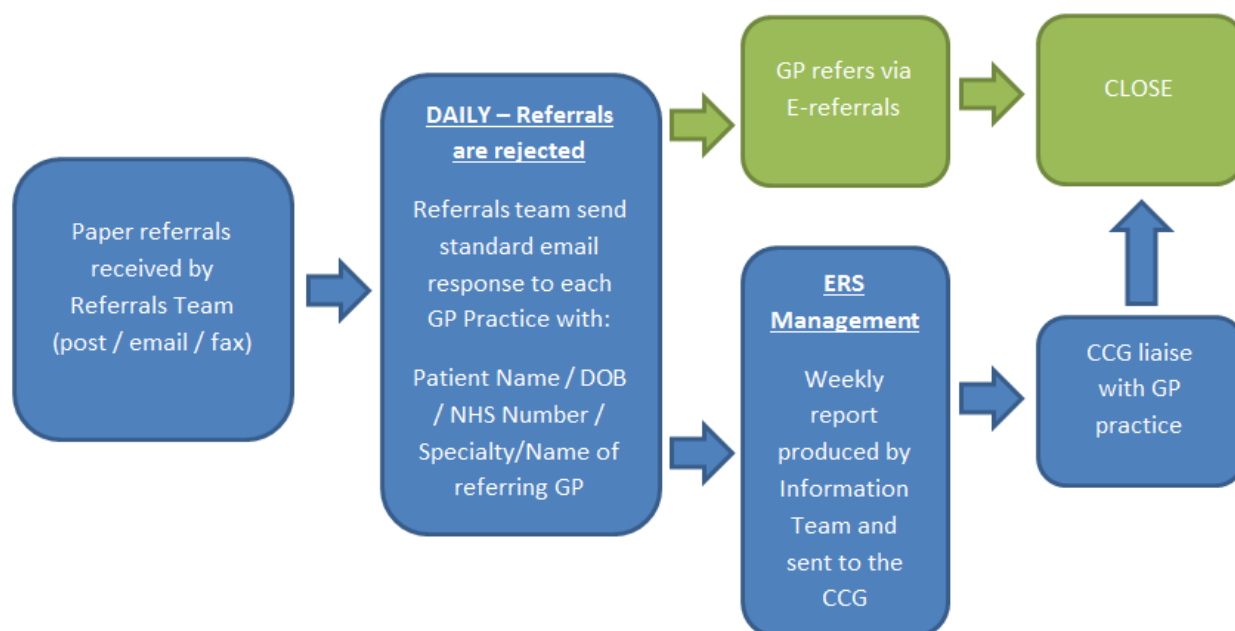
A new provision, which forms part of the current 2017/19 NHS Standard Contract, will take effect from 1st August 2018 locally and 1st October 2018 nationally; this is Service Condition 6.2A which states that:

“With effect from 1 October 2018, and as provided for in NHS e-Referral Guidance and/or any subsequent guidance published by NHS England and/or NHS Digital, the Provider need not accept (and will not be paid for any first outpatient attendance resulting from) Referrals by GPs to Consultant-led acute outpatient Services made other than through the NHS e-Referral Service.”

Under this new arrangement, providers will be able to return referrals to GP practices where they have not been made through the correct e-RS route.

4 Referral Return Process

4.1 Routine referrals process (maximum wait time to treatment = 18 weeks)



All paper referrals received will be date stamped on receipt and retained for 3 months. Disposal will follow standard Medical Records Policy – Patient Healthcare Records Policy (SWH 00598)

Return of e-referrals sent to the incorrect GP practice

If GP practices need to return any referrals to South Warwickshire NHS FT which were sent to the GP in error then the following e-mail address should be used: ereferral.swft@nhs.net

4.2 Two Week Wait referrals process – SUSPECTED CANCER ONLY (1st outpatient appointment within 14 days – maximum time to treatment = 62 days)

From 1st August to 1st October 2018 any two week wait referrals received by paper will still be processed but managed through the soft switch off route. This means that SWFT will process paper referrals but continue to alert the GP that referrals should be made via e-RS.

This will be reviewed in time for 1st October 2018.

Only patients suspected of cancer should be referred on the two week wait pathway. If, once a patient has been seen in a two week wait clinic, it is clear that the patient does not have cancer and they can be managed safely in primary care they will be discharged back to the GP as currently happens. If they require further management in secondary care this will be dealt with.

Please do not use a Two Week Wait referral to expedite routine referrals.

5 Paper Switch off exclusions

- Emergency clinics
 - Fracture clinics
 - Stroke / TIA
 - Ophthalmology emergency (retinal detachment)
 - Ambulatory clinics
- Antenatal / Obstetric clinics (not GP referred)
- AHP clinics (not consultant led clinics)
- Cardiac Rehabilitation (not GP referred)
- Clinical Oncology (not GP referred)
- Diagnostics / Imaging
- Prison referrals
- Opticians
- Dentists
- All non-GP to Consultant referrals
- Patients without NHS numbers

6 Contingency Plan – in event of e-RS being out of action

NHS Digital will make the Trust (as well as CCG's & GP's) aware of any National e-RS downtime via email to ICT services who in turn will send an "all user" ICT notification update/updates thereafter.

In the event that the e-RS system is not available or in the event where a particular GP surgery are unable to login / access e-RS contingency plans will be required to ensure the safe and timely handling of patient referrals.

6.1 Routine Referrals

- For routine referrals GP practices should be advised to hold these referrals for 1 working day in the event of a technical failure. If unresolved GP practices would then refer into SWFT by sending the referral via email to ereferral.swft@nhs.net
- Receipt of the referral in these circumstances would be confirmed.

- If emails are not available then referrals will need to be sent in the post to: Referrals Team, Main Outpatients, Warwick Hospital, Lakin Road, Warwick CV34 5BW.

6.2 Two Week Wait Referrals

- Two week wait referrals will be managed on clinical information only and will not be a means of expediting routine referrals.
- For each two week wait referral, GP practices should be advised to complete the existing proforma and send the referral via email to 2weekwait.swft@nhs.net
- The booking team should then undertake the following steps:
 - The two week wait referral team should email the practice to confirm receipt of referral
 - Manage the referral and contact the patient with an appointment

- Email the GP Practice to confirm the date and time of the booked appointment
- If emails are not available then two week wait referrals should be faxed to 01926 482663
- The booking team should then undertake the following steps:
 - The two week wait referral team should telephone the practice to confirm receipt of referral
 - Manage the referral and contact the patient with an appointment
 - Telephone the GP Practice to confirm the date and time of the booked appointment

7 Incident Reporting

In the event of an incident relating to e-Referrals it will be reported via the Incident Reporting system (Datix) as described in the Incident Management Policy including the Management of Serious Incidents (SWH 00020) and the Being Open and the Duty of Candour (SWH 00356).

8 Local issues at GP Practice level

If a local GP practice is unable to make a referral for any reason (such as e-RS being unavailable at a local practice or a GP being without a smartcard for example) other than a national problem, then practices should initially refer to their local CCG for advice.

If there are local problems in accessing e-RS then referrals can be sent to the e-mail addresses (1 or 2) below however practices will need to identify the reason within the email otherwise referrals may be returned.

9 Key Contacts

| | Email Address | Purpose |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | ereferral.swft@nhs.net | Referral returns and in the event of <u>e-RS being out of action</u> for routine referrals. |
| 2 | 2weekwait.swft@nhs.net | Two week wait referral returns and in the event of e-RS <u>being out of action</u> for 2WW referrals. |
| 3 | ereferralqueries@swft.nhs.uk | Any general queries regarding the e-referral service. |
| 4 | 01926 482663 | Fax number for 2WW referrals only in event of <u>ERS and email failure</u> |

