

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to guidance documents within NHS Lothian

Please note that as your request was extensive and very time consuming, we have worked up to the £600 limit as set under the Act.

Question:

- NHS Lothian guidance document.

Answer:

Medical records

1. NHS Lothian's guidance for healthcare providers making entries in TRAK between November 2019 and March 2020.
2. NHS Lothian's guidance regarding the documentation of discussions between patients and clinicians, healthcare providers in the medical records/TRAK.
3. NHS Lothian's guidance for clinicians and other healthcare providers documenting a patient's physical examination and their findings.

There is no specific guidance within NHS Lothian. All of our clinical teams record Medical Record information adhering to the GMC Professional Standards for Doctors. The appropriate GMC section:-

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/professional-standards/professional-standards-for-doctors>
<https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gmc-uk.org%2Fprofessional-standards%2Fprofessional-standards-for-doctors&data=05%7C02%7Clee.maxwell3%40nhs.scot%7C009f7a3dc65442c732b308dc6b609f27%7C10efe0bda0304bca809cb5e6745e499a%7C0%7C0%7C638503309928137920%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ij1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=r90FImWaWcFK0bVNpp%2BrzZtY5Jsak9tvwV7HBSzVn0%3D&reserved=0>

NHS Lothian's referral process between November 2019 and March 2020

1. What guidance was available to support clinicians in NHS Lothian who referred a patient from one speciality to another speciality for routine assessment between November 2019 and March 2020?
2. What guidance was available to support clinicians in NHS Lothian who referred a patient from one speciality to another speciality for urgent assessment between November 2019 and March 2020?
3. What, if any, documents were to be completed when referring an outpatient to another speciality for routine assessment?
4. What documents must be completed when referring an outpatient to another speciality for urgent assessment, if any?
5. What method of delivery was specified when sending routine referrals between specialities and hospitals within NHS Lothian, such as internal mail, email, or TRAK?
6. What method of delivery, if any, was specified when sending urgent referrals between specialities and hospitals within NHS Lothian, such as internal mail, email, or TRAK?
7. What written or published guidance was available from NHS Lothian to support the receiving team triage the referral?
8. What was NHS Lothian's policy for logging or documenting the date the receiving team received the referral?

- *Refhelp guidelines for intermittent claudication are from 05/04/23*

Vascular Referrals

1. What guidance, if any, was available to support clinicians in NHS Lothian referring a patient to the vascular team for routine assessment between November 2019 and March 2020?

- The main vascular launch page on Refhelp is <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/>

Further pages

- Abdominal aortic Aneurysm <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/abdominalaorticaneurysm/>
- Intermittent claudication <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/intermittentclaudication/>
- Superficial thrombophlebitis <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/haematology/superficialthrombophlebitis/>
- Tissue viability <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/tissueviability/>
- Ulcer – Leg and Foot <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/ulcerlegandfoot/>
- Varicose veins <https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/varicosevein/>

- The link for Intranet full leg ulcer assessment *Incl. Doppler ABPI is broken <http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/Directory/TissueViability/Guidelines/Pages/LegUlcers.aspx> - so we cannot currently access.
 - Leg Ulcer Assessment Sheet Final Mar 2013 (Attached)
 - Podiatry at [Podiatry – RefHelp \(nhslothian.scot\)](http://nhslothian.scot) <https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/podiatry/>
 - The intermittent claudication guidelines (<https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/vascularsurgery/intermittentclaudication/>) updated on 05/04/23. Earlier versions not available.
 - Leg ulceration and Oedema
 - <http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/Directory/TissueViability/Guidelines/Leg%20Ulceration%20and%20Oedema/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Lower leg assessment and Diagnosis
 - <http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/Directory/TissueViability/Guidelines/Leg%20Ulceration%20and%20Oedema/Lower%20Leg%20Assessment%20and%20Diagnosis/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Diabetic foot ulcer referral form <https://apps.nhslothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/podiatry/foot-ulceration/>
2. What guidance, if any, was available to support clinicians or other health practitioners in NHS Lothian referring a patient to the vascular team for urgent assessment between November 2019 and March 2020?
- 3.
- *See attachments/links*
 - *Sign Guideline 120 “Management of chronic venous leg ulcers” Published 2010 and withdrawn August 2020*
4. What guidance, if any, was available to support clinicians and other health care practitioners in NHS Lothian seeking advice on the urgency of a referral to the vascular team between November 2019 and March 2020? For example, was there guidance on calling the vascular registrar to advice? Was a call to the vascular registrar common practice?
- *GP referral pathways and advice pathways through Sci Gateway and Vascular email advice with the ability to ask questions through SciGateway.*
 - *Urgent vascular advice is available from the on call Vascular registrar. – contactable through switchboard as detailed below.*
5. On what date was the Ref Help App (providing referral guidance) launched by NHS Lothian?
- *Refhelp was launched in the current format 31.03.19. The IT site migrated to WordPress October 2022.*

6. On what date was the information regarding vascular referrals launched on the Ref Help App?
 - *See previous question, Vascular Surgery Refhelp was last updated 05.04.23*
7. How do the current referral guidelines differ from the referral process in November 2019 through March 2020?
 - *Current guidelines have been updated since the pandemic. Referral process remains the same but there is greater detail on indications for referral and management in primary care.*
8. What procedures and protocols did the vascular team follow to triage referrals between November 2019 and March 2020?
 - *Standard GP referrals by letter, email or SCI gateway were triaged by consultant surgeon on call. Urgent phone calls were received by on call registrar, contactable through switchboard*
9. Which member of the vascular team i.e., secretary, specialist registrar, consultant was responsible for determining the urgency of a referral?
 - *See above. On call vascular consultant triages generic referrals. Personal referrals are triaged by named consultant.*
10. Please provide the waiting time for routine assessment by the vascular team between and including the months of November 2019 and March 2020. Please give the waiting times for each month.

Waiting List Type	Month Starting	Priority	Completed Waits	Wait in Days		
				25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Outpatient	01-Nov-19	Routine	113	68	81	91
Outpatient	01-Dec-19	Routine	98	52	86	105.25
Outpatient	01-Jan-20	Routine	125	83	97	125
Outpatient	01-Feb-20	Routine	99	64	90	106
Outpatient	01-Mar-20	Routine	89	84	102	147

11. Please provide the waiting time for urgent assessment by the vascular team between November 2019 and March 2020. Please give the waiting times for each month.

Waiting List Type	Month Starting	Priority	Completed Waits	Wait in Days		
				25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile
Outpatient	01-Nov-19	Urgent	54	41.25	48	51.75
Outpatient	01-Dec-19	Urgent	29	35	48	56
Outpatient	01-Jan-20	Urgent	39	39	59	66
Outpatient	01-Feb-20	Urgent	43	50	75	77
Outpatient	01-Mar-20	Urgent	31	49	66	76.5

Radiology/vascular

- Please provide a copy of NHS Lothian's guidance for clinicians wishing to refer a patient to radiology for a routine and urgent ultrasound scan (USS).
- Please provide a copy of NHS Lothian's guidance for clinicians wishing to arrange a (i) routine and (ii) urgent duplex ultrasound scan of the leg to detect clots, arterial plaques and stenosis.
- In the absence of any guidance, please describe accepted practice across NHS Lothian for ultrasound scan referrals between November 2019 and March 2020.
- Please provide the NHS Lothian's waiting times for a routine referral for an ultrasonic scan of the leg to detect clots, arterial plaques, and stenosis between November 2019 and March 2020.
- Please provide the NHS Lothian's waiting times for an urgent referral for an ultrasound scan of the leg to detect clots, arterial plaques, and stenosis between November 2019 and March 2020.
 - Vascular duplex ultrasound are performed in the Vascular laboratory at Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh:
Urgent INPATIENTS within 24hrs of referral from the vasc team
Urgent OUTPATIENTS with 2/3 weeks of referral from the vasc team*
- Please provide the NHS Lothian waiting times for a routine duplex ultrasound scan of the leg between November 2019 and March 2020.
 - Vascular duplex ultrasound are performed in the Vascular laboratory at Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh:*
 - Routine OUTPATIENTS with 6/8 weeks of referral from the vasc team*

7. Please provide the NHS Lothian waiting times for an urgent duplex ultrasound scan of the leg between November 2019 and March 2020.

- *Vascular duplex ultrasound are performed in the Vascular laboratory at Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh:*
- *Urgent INPATIENTS within 24hrs of referral from the vasc team*
- *Urgent OUTPATIENTS with 2/3 weeks of referral from the vasc team*

Acute and critical limb ischaemia

1. Please provide copies of NHS Lothian’s guidance and assessment tools to support health care providers recognise and manage or refer patients with suspected acute limb ischaemia between November 2019 and March 2020.

- *No national guidelines from NICE or SIGN on Acute Limb Ischaemia*

2. Please provide copies of NHS Lothian’s guidance and assessment tools to support health care providers recognise and manage or refer patients with suspected critical limb ischaemia between November 2019 and March 2020.

- *See above leg ulcer assessment sheet*

3. Please provide copies of all guidance and assessment tools for NHS Lothian health care providers for treatment of acute limb ischaemia between November 2019 and March 2020.

- *No National Guidelines from NICE or SIGN on Acute Limb Ischemia*

4. Please provide copies of all guidance and assessment tools for NHS Lothian health care providers for treatment of critical limb ischaemia between November 2019 and March 2020.

- *See above leg ulcer assessment sheet*

Pathology/Haematology

1. Once blood is taken from an outpatient, what was the timescale for completing and reporting a vasculitic screen between November 2019 and March 2020?

Mean Collect to Report DateTime in hh:mm	Mean Receive to Report DateTime in hh:mm
322:21	282:22

Mean Collect to Report DateTime in days	Mean Receive to Report DateTime in days
13.4	11.8

2. Once the blood was taken from an outpatient, what was the timescale for completing and reporting a Lupus screen between November 2019 and March 2020?

Mean Collect to Report DateTime in hh:mm	Mean Receive to Report DateTime in hh:mm
143:39	124:09

Mean Collect to Report DateTime in days	Mean Receive to Report DateTime in days
6.0	5.2

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
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 Cc: Chief Executive