

## Diabetic podiatry

A referral assessment service for diabetic podiatry will be available from Monday 1 July. Referral assessment services allow GPs to refer patients into secondary care services without having to book an appointment.

This method of referral will allow us as the provider to decide on the most appropriate onward clinical pathway and our booking team will then arrange an appointment. If appropriate, they may return the triage request to the original referrer with advice, if an onward referral is not needed at that time.

The services will appear on e-Referral with a service type of **triage service -**;

- **Diabetic Podiatry Assessment - Complex Foot N Tyneside-Northumbria Healthcare FT RTF**  
North Tyneside CCG referrers -; please select this service for patients with active foot disease such as active ulceration, spreading infection, critical ischaemia, gangrene, unexplained hot, red, swollen foot or acute Charcot.
- **Diabetic Podiatry Assessment - Complex Foot Northumberland-Northumbria Healthcare FT RTF**  
Northumberland CCG referrers - please select this service for patients with active foot disease such as active ulceration, spreading infection, critical ischaemia, gangrene, unexplained hot, red, swollen foot or acute Charcot.
- **Diabetic Podiatry Assessment - Foot Protection-Northumbria Healthcare FT RTF**
  - North Tyneside CCG - any referrals for routine treatment or second screening please select this service
  - Northumberland CCG - there are no changes to the referral process for Northumberland community podiatry foot protection team.

We would ask all primary care referrers to use the referral assessment (send for triage) service from Monday 1 July. Referrals for diabetic podiatry will no longer be accepted via ICE after this date.

There will be no change to the process of booking appointments once the referral has been received and they will continue to be triaged within 1 working day.

If you have any queries please contact Diane Williams, e-Referral lead - 0191 203 1253 / [diane.williams@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:diane.williams@northumbria.nhs.uk)

---

## Ear bulb syringing

As you may be aware we are looking to empower patients regarding self-care for ear wax using ear bulb syringes. This has been very successfully piloted in several locations across Northumberland and North Tyneside with high patient satisfaction, reductions in nurse syringing appointments and in consultations with GPs regarding syringing. Consequently we plan to roll this out across both areas.

Patients who have hearing impairment where the cause is unknown will still need to see a clinician, but we hope expanding this intervention will free up time in both primary care and in the community as well as speeding things up for patients too.

Ear bulb syringing is very much the norm for patients in Europe with ear wax issues and it is hoped that it will be a solution for many local patients, but clearly some will still require traditional ear syringing

Those who should not attempt ear bulb syringing is defined in a patient leaflet and includes:

- Pain in the ear
- A history of eardrum perforation in the affected ear
- A recent history of an ear infection in the affected ear
- Symptoms of infection in the ear
- If you only have one hearing ear which is the affected ear
- Previous ear surgery on the affected ear

Where appropriate, patients will be given the leaflet and community pharmacies have been asked, through the Local Pharmaceutical Committee to stock ear bulb syringes, these are cheap and re-usable by the patient. To further help the pilot we have purchased a number of ear bulb syringes that community staff will give to patients who have regular ear syringing appointments.

We will continue to monitor this. Please contact Alistair Blair, GP medical director, if you have any questions - [alistair.blair@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:alistair.blair@northumbria.nhs.uk).

---

## Local anaesthetic vasectomy service in Northumberland

**GPs in Northumberland are being made aware that the process for referring patients for a local anaesthetic vasectomy has changed.**

Patients requesting a local anaesthetic vasectomy should now be referred to our integrated sexual health service which will provide the preoperative counselling and the surgical procedure.

To refer a patient, please send the referral form to:

One to One Centre  
Gas House Lane  
Morpeth  
Northumberland  
NE61 1SR

Patients can refer themselves by calling the service direct on 01670 51 51 51.

Referrals for local anaesthetic vasectomy will no longer be accepted by the urology department. Please [click here](#) to view the new referral pathway.

---

If you have a query or if there is something that you would like to be included in future editions of this newsletter please email [cara.charlton@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:cara.charlton@northumbria.nhs.uk)