

# Community Endoscopy Service at Thetford Healthy Living Centre

## Frequently Asked Questions for Practice Staff



These questions are intended as a guide. Please do not hesitate to contact the Endoscopy Service on 01842 767600 if there are any questions you need answering.

### Background to this service

#### 1. Why do we need a community based endoscopy service?

National guidance states that many diagnostic endoscopies can be dealt with in community settings, rather than being seen in secondary care departments.

- **More cost effective.** This community service is provided at cheaper tariffs than the national tariffs used in hospitals
- **Quicker.** Waiting times for appointments for this service are generally 2-3 weeks from referral
- **High patient satisfaction.** Our innovative use of transnasal endoscopy offers very high levels of comfort
- **Immediate feedback.** Both patients and GP's get a full diagnostic report on the day of appointment

#### 2. Will the service be another administrative burden?

No. The new service requires no more administrative work than at present.

Your surgery will be generating the Choose and Book details for patients as usual, showing both the hospital and Community Endoscopy Service at the Thetford Healthy Living Centre. Medical secretaries are asked to add a patient letter containing a map showing where the local service is situated and how to get there by car and public transport.

#### 3. Does the practice need to use the referral template?

We would like you to; yes - but the real answer is 'no, you don't have to'. You may simply create a letter. However, we do ask you to ensure all the information on the referral template is included in your referral to ensure the required information is received. The reason for the referral ought to be clearly stated and easy to find. You can fax the template or make a referral using Choose and Book.

#### 4. What will happen to any referral received where some information is missing?

Depending upon what and how much information is missing, you may be telephoned to gather the information that is required. The referral may not be able to be progressed if key information is missing.

#### 5. How will the new service work with Choose and Book?

You will initiate the Choose and Book referral for this service just as for any other Choose and Book referrals, except that you are making an indirect booking and your patient will be telephoned to complete the process.

#### 6. What information is available for patients?

- There are a number of patient leaflets that the booking service will send to patients when they confirm their appointment. These leaflets are at the back of the Practice Pack. If the practice finds it useful to use them as part of the referral process they are free to do so.
- A poster template will be provided for you to put on your notice board if you wish.
- A map and directions is included with the patient letter that the practice sends.

### What the new service means for your patients

#### 7. What does the service actually do?

The service provided in the community offers exactly the same treatment as the patient would receive if they were having it in the hospital. Patients going for gastroscopies and sigmoidoscopies will normally be able to have them on their first appointment. Patients going for a colonoscopy will normally have two appointments: a pre-assessment with a nurse, and then a return appointment for the investigation.

The service will not treat any patients whose investigation is not appropriate to deliver in a community setting. If the patient needs to be referred to secondary care this should be done by the surgery in the normal way.

#### 8. How will patients be affected?

For any patient being referred there will be more options available to them in their GP consultation. The referring GP will go through the available options including the community option where this may be more appropriate than the hospital service for the patient's need.

When the patient chooses the Community Endoscopy Service at Thetford Healthy Living Centre, the medical secretary will make an indirectly bookable appointment on Choose and Book and send a letter to the patient giving instructions on how to book their appointment directly. This letter will include a map detailing how to get to Thetford Healthy Living Centre. This will include information about the local bus service.

#### 9. What are the important contact details I need to know?

- For administrative questions about the service and the booking, contact Thetford Healthy Living Centre, on **01842 767600**.
- The address of Thetford Healthy Living Centre is Croxton Road, Thetford IP24 1JD and the phone number **01842 767600**.

#### 10. What about patient identifiable data?

It will be necessary to share patient data to facilitate the referral process. All data will be treated in strictest confidence. All data will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act and NHS confidentiality regulations.

#### 11. What support is there for vulnerable patients?

Because the service is indirectly bookable (this means that the patient rings the actual clinic to make their appointment), the staff making the appointment be will sensitive to the patient's particular needs. They are trained to highlight what preparation the patient needs to make, they will send them the right information leaflet, and they will address any transport issues.

