

Teledermatology comms – feedback and lessons learned in the first month of operation

The new process for making 2ww skin referrals has now been in place for a little over a month. The new process involves :-

- Using the new 2ww skin referral form
- Attaching the prescribed 3 images to the referral
- Sending the referral to LTHT exclusively using 2ww skin Referral Assessment Service accessed via e-RS

The new process has already led to significant numbers of patients being safely discharged without an appointment. However, the project team has also received a number of queries and comments, and in order to help everyone make the best use of teledermatology, the project team are sharing these with you, along with our advice.

I saw a patient suitable for teledermatology, but I couldn't get hold of the kit

This issue has come up fairly regularly. Unfortunately as we have not been able to provide dermatoscopes and iPods for every consulting room, the kit has to be shared across the practice. Our recommendation is that the kit is stored in a designated place at each general practice site, taken from this designated place when its use is appropriate, and returned to that place (following the infection control measures) immediately following the GP consultation. In this way, unless two consultations requiring the use of the kit take place at the same time, the kit should always be available.

In order to operate effectively, all practice staff should be aware of where the designated place for storage of teledermatology kit is.

I saw a patient suitable for teledermatology, but the kit was not charged

Our recommendation is that the kit is left permanently on charge, in the designated place, when not being used. This will *not* in any way be harmful to the batteries of either the iPods or dermatoscopes.

The requirement within the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to keep the kit secure at all times means that it takes too long to get access to the kit when we need it, and return it to locked storage following use

The requirement that the kit be kept secure in this instance should be interpreted as a place which is known to all practice staff who will be required to use them (or who may be required to advise other staff where to find them), and where the risk of theft or damage to the devices is minimised. Typically this would be a place that practice staff have access to, but patients do not. There is no requirement for the kit to be kept locked up when not in use. The process SOP has been amended in order to clarify this

To be clear, the sole security consideration relates to having to replace kit as the result of theft or damage. If images are taken using the Consultant Connect PhotoSAF app, There is zero chance of an IG breach should these assets be stolen, as no images or other data are stored on either the iPod or dermatoscope.

Who is able to use this equipment?

The equipment has been procured and supplied exclusively for the use of GPs during the course of the consultation with the patient for the purposes of attaching images to a 2ww skin referral. It is very important for patient safety reasons that the images are taken by the clinician who has identified the suspicious lesion at the time that the decision is made to refer. Usage by non-clinicians, or transferring responsibility for the taking of the image are specifically excluded within the SOP in order to clarify this.

There are plans to widen the use of the kit and the PhotoSAF app. to include referrals or advice and guidance requests for other purposes, such as benign dermatology or wound prevention and management – or indeed potentially any other use where the sharing or storage on a patient record of a clinical image would prove helpful. Usage by other clinicians, such as nurses or nurse practitioners will also be considered. Guidance on this extended use will be provided in the coming weeks.

We are experiencing difficulties with our practice secure Wi-Fi

A minority of practices have experienced difficulties with access or the performance of their practice secure Wi-Fi. If this is the case in your practice, please contact carrick.armer@nhs.net, and you will be contacted in order to make sure that you are able to access strong and secure Wi-Fi

We have attempted to log on to the Consultant Connect PhotoSAF app, but it is failing to download

This issue has been identified in a small number of practices. If your iPod continues to fail to auto-download the app. when activating the iPod, please contact carrick.armer@nhs.net, to resolve the issue so that you can successfully download the app. *We shall shortly be contacting those practices where we believe the app has not downloaded in order to ensure that we have full citywide coverage.*

Very Important – Making of referrals

- We have recently become aware of a practice that attached identical images to referrals relating to different patients. This clearly represented a significant safety risk, and was immediately raised with the practice concerned. The investigation of the incident revealed that the practice had adopted their own independent operating procedures, differing from those contained within the citywide Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) developed by project team. **The strong recommendation of the project team is that practices follow the process contained within the citywide SOP. These have been developed to ensure that events such as those described above do not occur. It is entirely the responsibility of general practice to ensure the accuracy of clinical information contained within the referral, including ensuring that the images attached relate to the patient for whom the referral is being made.**
- The LTHT dermatology team have also reported that a number of practices are continuing to use out of date 2ww skin referral forms. Please be sure to use the new updated form, which has been specifically designed for use when making a referral with images attached.