

Integrated MSK Service GP Newsletter November 2018



Wirral University
Teaching Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Helpline

GP – WUTH.MSK@nhs.net (we will respond within 48 hours)

Patient – 0151 604 7501 OPTION 2 (this option goes directly to the MSK booking team)

Website

GP [Click here](#)

Patient [Click here](#)

Referrals

Triage service	Expected per mth	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18
Upper Limb	868	849	748	828	809
Lower Limb	1,361	1,380	1,208	1,217	1,263
Spinal	998	956	905	956	899
Rheumatology	182	175	163	160	179
Podiatry	827	798	756	755	TBC
TOTAL	4,236	4,158	3,780	3,916	3,150 +

Current Waiting Times at WUTH

Specialty	Wait to be seen	
Orthopaedics	Foot & Ankle	6 weeks
	Hip	10 weeks
	Knee	9 weeks
	Upper Limb	6 weeks
Rheumatology	12 weeks	
Pain	19 weeks	
Physiotherapy	4-6 weeks	
Podiatry	3 weeks	

Waits for specific consultants can be longer than above. There is currently a Specialist Registrar vacancy in Orthopaedic Hip. All patients are offered choice of provider, therefore patients can opt to go to Spire Murrayfield and be seen within 3-6 weeks depending on specialty.

Updates

This section addresses some of the issues that have come up over the last month.

Patient Leaflet

Please continue to hand out the patient leaflet so that patients are aware of what is going to happen and have access to the telephone number. The MSK website has the most up to date leaflet to download [here](#).

Urgent MRIs

The Integrated Musculoskeletal Service has been commissioned to order MRIs for MSK conditions. However, due to regulations, we are unable to order scans without assessing the patient first. This can lead to unnecessary delay for patients who require urgent scans. We understand that some scans were being rejected by Radiology. Please follow the procedure below for urgent scans.

24hr urgent

Patient should be referred to A&E for:

- Cauda Equina – if red flag symptoms present for less than 48 hours
- Suspected Metastatic Spinal Cord Compression

Urgent MRI (within 1 week)

GP should confirm with a Radiologist by telephone, and state consultant name on referral

- Suspected cervical myelopathy
- PMH of cancer with new onset back pain and no altered neurology – should have full spine MRI (if have altered neurology should be referred to A&E)
- Signs of possible cauda equina but symptoms have been ongoing for more than 48 hours

Waiting times

We have already started to see the waiting times to see a consultant come down. However the wait for physiotherapy is higher than we want it to be. This is because;

- 85 physiotherapy patients have transferred to us from other AQP providers
- 97 orthopaedic and rheumatology patients who were transferred to us from AQP providers are now receiving physio treatment
- Approximately 5,000 appointments have been brought forward by the elimination of the enforced six week wait for physiotherapy. We have managed to absorb a lot of these by putting on additional clinics, but it will take some time before we're back to normal.
- All patients that require an MRI must be seen face to face by a physiotherapist under IRMA regulations. This has extended the wait for MCAS clinics

We are working on the following things to help

- Exploring the possibility of texting patients to acknowledge that their referral has been received. This is currently in the Information Governance process.
- Assigned resource to take patient queries will be in place before Christmas.
- Increased short term capacity via locums to reduce the backlog
- Working with Radiology for alternatives to face to face contact
- Exploring alternative ways of delivering MCAS clinics to increase throughput

Treatment locations

Now that we have three months' of referral activity we are able to start the next stage of the review of treatment locations. There is a gap in Birkenhead North and Moreton so we will be in touch with practices in those areas to discuss the availability of clinic space.

Clinical information in MSK referral form

The MSK referral is designed to speed up the triage process, as it standardises the location of information. We have had some instances where the triage decision has been questioned but relevant information has not been provided on the referral form.

When patients are triaged for surgery, it is helpful for the triaging physio to notify the booking team when a patient is not clinically appropriate for Clatterbridge or Spire Murrayfield. The ASA Physical Status Classification System criteria are used to determine this. We have had incidents of patients choosing to be seen at Spire Murrayfield, but being rejected on clinical grounds. This adds unnecessary delay to their pathway.

Therefore it is really helpful for the following information to be included in the referral form to ensure no delay in referral;

- BMI
- Existence of Pacemaker
- Diabetes (controlled?)
- Previous joint surgery

Duplicate referrals

We receive approximately 20-30 referrals a week that are either duplicate (exactly the same attachments) or for the same patient and condition but from a different GP in the same practice. We regularly review the referral list for duplicates, but sometimes these are not caught in time and the patient can be given multiple appointments. Please could you also look out for this so that we can reduce confusion for patients and avoid wasting any appointments. If you wish to raise the priority of the referral to urgent, please do not send in another referral. Please email WUTH.MSK@nhs.net and we will do this on behalf.

Meet the Team

Every month, we will focus on a different part of the integrated service. This month we will focus on the Lower Limb triage team.

Lower Limb triage team



Dan Hopwood, Highly Specialist MSK Physio
Michael Corran, Advanced Physio Practitioner

Jan Yates, Lower Limb Clinical Specialist

All referrals for patients with a lower limb condition are triaged by our team of Advanced Lower Limb Physiotherapists. This gives all patients rapid access to a specialist opinion and ensures that only appropriate referrals are sent on to the consultants.

The team has triaged 3,764 referrals since the service went live and has seen 367 patients in MCAS clinics.

Michael Corran has worked as a clinical Physiotherapy specialist in Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospital Trust for many years and has extensive experience in the management and provision of MCAS services.

Michael has worked alongside many orthopaedic lower limb consultants in their outpatient clinics but also alongside GP's with special interest in MSK in shaping primary care services.

Michael's experience is supplemented by an MSc in Advanced Practice in Healthcare

Michael crossed the Mersey in February and has been working within the WUTH orthopaedic clinics up until the start of MCAS this July.

WUTH MSK website

The MSK website can be found at <https://www.wuth.nhs.uk/making-a-referral/wirral-integrated-musculoskeletal-service/>

The site will be continually developed but currently includes;

- All published newsletters
- Information about the new service
- Downloadable referral forms
- Downloadable patient leaflet
- Useful links to patient self-management advice and websites