

Resident GP Referral Toolkit

Keep this toolkit as part of your GP placement toolkit. It is designed to help you become familiar with the many services available to support patients in the community and guide you towards the most appropriate referral pathways. Early in your placement, spend some time learning your local referral processes, and don't underestimate the knowledge of practice secretaries and administrators, who are often invaluable sources of local expertise.

Service	Referral Criteria	Your local pathway
ADHD Foundation and ADHD UK	Information and advice Health education regarding ADHD Support for parents, carers, young people Screening support, employment support	
Adult Social Care	Care needs with washing, dressing, eating Safeguarding concerns Carer breakdown Dementia support needs Vulnerable adult at risk	
Age UK (charity)	Befriending services Home support, benefits advice Day centres for socialising and activities	
Alzheimer's Society	Suspected or confirmed dementia Memory concerns or cognitive impairment Advice, education, and help with benefits Practical support	
Children Social Care	Safeguarding – any Neglect/chronic unmet needs Self-harm or severe mental health Domestic abuse, family breakdown Disabled children support needs	
Citizens Advice	Problems with welfare benefits, debt, housing issues, employment problems, immigration issues, cost of living pressures	
Community Dietitian	Malnutrition risk, unintended weight loss, poor intake, or feeding difficulties Medical conditions needing specialist dietary management Enteral feeding or oral nutritional supplement needs	
Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)	Severe/enduring mental illness Bipolar disorder Schizophrenia / psychosis	

	Complex risk issues Personality disorder with high need Failed primary care treatment	
Community Palliative Care	Life-limiting illness Cancer or advanced disease Symptom control needs End-of-life planning Home support required (e.g. syringe drivers)	
Community Physiotherapy	Musculoskeletal pain Mobility decline Falls risk Rehabilitation after illness/injury Housebound patients	
Community Speech and Language Therapy	Speech, sound, communication difficulties Swallowing difficulties Developmental delay in communication Communication needs linked to specific conditions (e.g. autism)	
District Nursing	Housebound patients only Wound care / dressings / bloods Catheter care Palliative care Medication administration Complex nursing need at home	
Falls Prevention Service	Recurrent falls, Unsteady gait, Frailty Usually for people over 65 Fear of falling affecting independence	
Frailty Team	Frailty Multiple long-term conditions Frequent admissions, Polypharmacy Complex elderly patients	
Gambling Addiction Service	Supports patients whose gambling is causing harm to mental health, finances, work and family life. Can help patients stop or cut down	
Healthier Together	NHS-backed health advice for the public and professionals, covers all stages of life Helps to decide what to do if a child is unwell	
Memory Assessment Service	Progressive memory decline Functional impairment Family concerns (GP needs to exclude reversible causes first)	
MIND (charity)	Mental health support Peer support, counselling Crisis support and helplines	

	Social support if it affects mental wellbeing	
Occupational Therapy	Difficulty washing, dressing or cooking Falls risk Home adaptations needed Reduced independence Functional decline after illness	
Orthotics	Need for orthotic devices Foot deformity, pressure risk, or diabetic foot concerns Mobility or functional difficulties	
Pharmacy First	Minor infections Hay fever Rashes Simple pain issues Medication advice	
Podiatry	Foot pain, deformity, or mobility problems High-risk foot conditions e.g. diabetes Skin and nail problems Biomechanical / gait issues	
School Nursing	School aged children with issues regarding growth, continence, sleep, behaviour, emotional health, bullying, attendance, weight, safeguarding	
Smoking Cessation	Current smoker wanting to quit Pregnancy smoking support COPD / asthma / heart disease patients	
Social Prescribing	Loneliness / isolation Frequent GP attendance with social causes Housing / debt / employment stress affecting health Long-term conditions needing lifestyle support Motivation for community engagement Exercise groups, bereavement support, well-being groups	
Substance Misuse Services	Alcohol dependence and/or Drug misuse Harm reduction and detox support	
Talking Therapy	Mild to moderate depression Anxiety disorders, panic, OCD, PTSD (some areas) Provides CBT, counselling, guided self-help Self-referral often possible Not for use in crisis	

Virtual Ward / Hospital at home	Stable patients that need hospital level monitoring or treatment Need suitable home environment and clear escalation plans Cases such as infection, COPD, heart failure, frailty, and post-discharge care	
Weight Management Services	Failed self-managed attempts Varying BMI thresholds Obesity with diabetes / hypertension Tier 2 may accept self-referral	

Please give us feedback via- [Resident GP referral toolkit feedback form – Fill in form](#)

2 week wait referrals

These are general and based on NICE guidelines,

please check your local pathway and familiarise yourself with how to make referrals

Service	Referral Criteria	Your local pathway
Breast	New breast lump in adults Unilateral and/or bloody nipple discharge Skin distortion, peau d'orange or ulceration Axillary lump suspicious for malignancy Persistent breast changes in men (especially >50)	
Dermatology	Changing and/or pigmented lesion Non-healing lesions Asymmetry, border irregularity Size increase, Colour variation Evolution/change, rapid growth	
Gynaecology	Persistent bloating, early satiety Persistent pelvic or abdominal pain Pelvic mass, ascites Raised CA125 Post-menopausal bleeding Persistent intermenstrual bleeding Suspicious cervix on exam Persistent postcoital bleeding	
Haematology	Persistent unexplained lymphadenopathy Hepatosplenomegaly Abnormal blood counts suspicious for leukaemia Paraproteinaemia / myeloma features	

	B symptoms: weight loss, night sweats, and fever	
Head and Neck	Persistent unexplained neck lump Hoarseness >3 weeks Oral ulcer >3 weeks Red/white oral patches suspicious for malignancy Dysphagia Unilateral tonsillar enlargement Persistent unilateral nasal obstruction with bleeding	
Lower GI	Iron deficiency anaemia Rectal bleeding with change in bowel habit Persistent change in bowel habit (>6 weeks) Palpable rectal or abdominal mass Positive FIT test Unexplained weight loss with abdominal symptoms	
Lung	Abnormal chest X-ray suspicious for cancer Persistent haemoptysis Persistent cough with weight loss Chest pain or dyspnoea with abnormal imaging Supraclavicular lymphadenopathy	
Neurology	Progressive focal neurological deficit New seizures Persistent headaches with red flags Signs of raised intracranial pressure Cognitive/personality change Suspicious brain imaging	
Non-specific	Unexplained weight loss Persistent fatigue Appetite loss Recurrent unexplained pain Raised inflammatory markers Multiple vague but concerning symptoms	
Upper GI	Dysphagia Persistent vomiting Upper abdominal mass Weight loss with upper abdominal symptoms Jaundice Iron deficiency anaemia with upper GI symptoms Weight loss with new diabetes	

Urology	Visible haematuria without infection Persistent or recurrent haematuria, including microscopic haematuria Renal mass on imaging Painless testicular mass Suspicious ultrasound findings Malignant-feeling prostate on DRE Raised PSA with concerning features Two raised PSA results with no concerning features	
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