

## **Centralisation of Podiatry booking for all patients**

### **Outline of Podiatry Service**

The Podiatry Service across Solent NHS Trust currently provides services out of 38 community sites. This includes 23 sites in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire and 15 sites in Southampton and South West Hampshire.

Solent NHS Trust's Podiatry Service is commissioned to provide 91,000 treatments per year. Due to the size and the geographic spread of the service, there is a need for a coordinated, effective first point of contact that provides an efficient booking and patient administration process. This is essential for effectiveness and business quality.

### **Case for change**

Solent NHS Trust will lead the way in the provision of community services for adults, the frail elderly and those with long term conditions.

For the past six months, Solent NHS Trust's Podiatry Service has been undertaking a major transformation project which has resulted in the service moving to one common electronic patient record and centralised booking system. This project has involved the transfer of 18,000 of Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Podiatry patients onto the new system, called TPP. This transfer has been undertaken manually and has been running since March 2012. All Podiatry staff have been trained on the new system and training has been provided to minimise the impact on patient care.

From Monday 14 May 2012, the central booking team at Adelaide Health Centre in Southampton began receiving all new referrals. These are triaged and appropriately appointed.

Patients now only need to call one number (023 8060 8800) to make an appointment. By calling this number, the Central Booking Team can check for availability at a patient's local clinic and make a booking. Short term bookings, less than six weeks following treatment, will be made by the Podiatrist at the point of care.

### **Benefits**

The benefits of the new system include:

1. One, easy to remember, contact number for patients to remember to access the service (**023 8060 8800**). Previously Podiatry Services had many numbers and points of access.

2. An efficient triaging and booking system for all patients.
3. One electronic patient record system which allows the movement of staff to cover leave and sickness.
4. Streamlining of the referral process so that patient gets the right care at the right time
5. Return appointments up to six weeks ahead made by the Podiatrist at the time of appointment.

### **Challenges**

For the first two weeks (14 – 25 May 2012) Podiatry in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire did run a reduced number clinics to allow for staff to become fully proficient with the new system. This reduction was planned for. During the two week period the focus was on the 'At Risk' foot patients (present or new foot ulceration).

There has been a high volume of calls to the new number due to demand. During the first week there were on average 350 calls per day. This demand was expected and the service has dealt with any concerns raised. We have added capacity to ensure we can answer all calls as quickly and efficiently as possible.

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