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**Devon Referral Support Service**

Tel: 01626 883888 (Helpdesk)

Email: [drss.helpdesk@nhs.net](mailto:drss.helpdesk@nhs.net)

Web: [myhealth-devon.nhs.uk](https://myhealth-devon.nhs.uk/)

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

**(patient name)**

**(address)**

Booking Reference: **[UBRN]**

Date: 28/06/2022

Dear **(patient name)**

**Re: Confirmation of a Referral for Specialist Appointment or Advice**

You were recently referred by a GP or health professional for specialist **(Specialty)** NHS advice or care. Your referral has now been passed to **(provider)** for a clinician to review. This will lead to one of the following:

* **An appointment** – this may be a face to face, telephone or video appointment and will be arranged with you directly by the clinic or hospital
* **Being placed on a waiting list** – this will be arranged by the clinic or hospital who will contact you directly either via letter or telephone
* **Advice or guidance** – the clinic or hospital clinician reviewing your referral will get in touch with the GP or health professional who referred you. The person who referred you will contact you with an update.

You will hear from **(provider)** or your referrer in due course but please bear in mind that, due to current NHS pressures, this may take longer than usual.

Please note that you will need to consider your transport arrangements for any hospital appointments.

If you have any questions or concerns about your referral, please use the contact details provided at the top of this letter.**If you have been contacted by (provider) or by DRSS regarding this referral in the last few days, you do not need to do anything else.**

Yours sincerely



**Devon Referral Support Service**

Covid 19 has affected the normal running of the NHS. The length of time people are waiting to be seen or treated has increased at all the hospitals in Devon. Over the page are the answers to some questions you may have.

**When will I be seen?**

The NHS is working hard to give people this information. All the hospitals in Devon are making sure care is given to people most in clinical need first. To help you understand how long the wait may be please visit **myhealth-devon.nhs.uk/my-referral/waiting-times –** please note the times shown are average waiting times so your wait could be longer.

**I haven’t heard anything – have I been forgotten**?

Waiting times are much longer than usual. Please be assured that by getting this letter it means you are in the system and you have not been forgotten. Do keep hold of all your letters and check the current waiting times on the MyHealth Devon website. **Please do not contact the hospital or your GP to check where you are on the list as they are very unlikely to be able to tell you where you are on the list.**

**Will it be quicker to be seen somewhere else?**

You have a right to choose to be seen and treated at another appropriate hospital in England. If you do decide to be seen at a different hospital you will have to travel and have the full treatment, including any follow up appointments, at the same hospital. For more information about your right to choose please visit the **MyHealth Devon** website.

**My condition has changed – what should I do?**

If you are much better and you no longer need to be seen it would be helpful to inform the hospital so you can be removed from their lists. If you feel your condition is getting much worse, you can contact your GP to help with the symptoms. Your GP is unlikely to be able to get you seen quicker or know the current waiting times but can help you manage your condition.

**What can I do while I wait?**

Many people are waiting longer for treatment and we know this can be difficult. There are things you can do to help yourself stay well and prepare for your treatment:

* Visit the **MyHealth Devon website – myhealth-devon.nhs.uk** –the My Condition section offers information on managing a range of topics and conditions, including pain management, anxiety and stress.
* Get/stay in shape for surgery – not every referral leads to an operation, but where it does, the healthier people are before surgery, the better your outcome. The Local Support section of the MyHealth Devon website has information on healthy lifestyles and tips and advice on getting in shape for surgery.
* Appointments may arise which will reduce your waiting time. It is worth being ready to accept a short notice appointment if it is offered.

Information on the MyHealth Devon website is reliable and regularly updated. If you are unable to access the website, please call the **DRSS helpdesk on 01626 883888**.

**I am really struggling to manage – what can I do?**

If you struggle to cope with everyday tasks whilst you are waiting, there may be support available in the community. Please call **Living Options Devon** on Freephone **0300 3731333** or email: **info@livingoptions.org** – the advisor will try and put you in contact with local support that can help you with practical steps to keep you well while you wait.