

## Patient advice sheet

### Department of Dermatology and Skin Surgery

#### What is Teledermatology?

Teledermatology is the use of specialist camera equipment to take photographs of your skin lesion. Your photographs will be reviewed by a Dermatologist (Skin Specialist) and they will decide on any further treatment if required.

The photographs are high quality and taken by qualified medical photographers. These will be available to the dermatologist for assessment. This type of service is provided in many areas of the country and is an excellent way of helping patients be seen more quickly without losing any quality in the care received

#### Why have you been referred to the Teledermatology service?

Your GP has referred you on the Urgent Suspected Cancer Referral Service. Teledermatology allows your skin lesion(s) to be assessed more quickly and efficiently. If you need to be seen by a doctor in person, we can make sure you are seen in the most appropriate clinic.

#### What are the benefits of this service?

- A quicker understanding of the cause of your skin concern.
- A faster referral to the correct clinic for a follow-up appointment if needed.

#### What happens at my first appointment?

After booking in at reception you will be seen by a member of the team in the Medical Photography department who will answer any questions you may have and discuss the next steps. The member of staff will obtain your written consent for the service and medical photographs. Once your consent is gained, you will have photos taken your lesion(s) by one of the Medical Photography team.

The Medical Photographer will take images of your lesion(s) using standard clinical photography, as well as specialist dermoscopic photography. Four to six images will be taken of each lesion to best show the shape, size, colour, and any distinguishing features. Specialist Dermoscopic images will also be taken with a lens that touches the skin.

After the photographs have been taken, you can leave the hospital.

Please note, we will only assess the specific lesion(s) that you were referred for.

#### You will not have a face-to-face consultation with a doctor at this appointment

The photographs and any other documentation will be securely stored digitally in the Trust imaging and patient information software, along with the referral letter from your GP and your consent form.

## **What happens after my appointment?**

The information will be assessed by a Dermatologist who will carefully review your photographs and the referral letter from your GP.

One of the following outcomes is possible:

- Discharge from the clinic because there is nothing to worry about
- A clinic appointment to see a Dermatologist in person
- An appointment for a biopsy to be taken (this is where a small piece of skin is taken and sent to a laboratory for diagnosis)
- A minor surgery appointment if the lesion needs removal. (Consent for the procedure will be taken on the day.)
- Referral to a different clinic if the lesion needs removing by a specialist surgeon (Plastic Surgeon or Oro-Maxillofacial Surgeon)
- A routine follow-up appointment. You will be contacted and offered an appointment.
- Treatment by your GP - It may be that you don't need to be seen in hospital but will be managed by your GP. If this is the case, it will be clearly stated in the letter. It is very important that if the letter says this, you call your GP practice and make the appointment so that your treatment, if any, can be started.

The doctor who reviews your photographs will write to you and your GP with the management plan, so you are always kept up to date with what is happening with you. This will usually be within 14 days after the first appointment.

### **Contact Information**

Dermatology Secretarial Team – 01296 831160

Dermatology Booking Team – 01296 838888

Booking Team email – [bht.dermbookingteam@nhs.net](mailto:bht.dermbookingteam@nhs.net)

---

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

### **How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?**

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

### **Patient Advice Sheet**

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net).