



**Northern, Eastern and Western Devon  
Clinical Commissioning Group**

Ref: FOI1120

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Tel: 01392 205205

03 November 2016

Dear

**Re: Request for information under Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received on Wednesday 2 November 2016.

The CCG is confirming in accordance with Section - (1) (a) of the Act, it holds the information requested and (b) is supplying it unless otherwise specified.

I can confirm that NHS Northern, Eastern and Western Devon CCG hold part the requested information.

**Q1: Please disclose details of any referral management system or scheme that your CCG currently has in place for managing referrals from GPs to secondary care. (please include details of when the current system was introduced, the name of the service provider and which clinical specialities the system applies to).**

Back ground information.

In Plymouth the Referral Management Centre (RMC) was introduced in April 2008 and covers practices in Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon and Eastern Cornwall.

In Newton Abbot the RMC was introduced in November 2009 and covers practices in Northern Devon, Eastern Devon and South Devon and Torbay.

Prior to these dates both centres handled orthopaedic referrals.

In September 2013 the centres were merged to form 1 team - Devon Referral Support Services (DRSS)

Details of the CCG's referral management system are published on the CCG's website [here](#)

**Q2: Please state in percentage terms and in numerical terms how the referral management system has impacted upon first outpatient attendances since its implementation (for example, it has led to an X% reduction, and X fewer referrals).**

The CCG do not record this information.

Referrals may be returned when information is missing which prevents booking the right clinic or not meeting the criteria set out in our commissioning policies and clinical referral guidelines.

Another example, a specialist has reviewed the referral and advises the GP on how to treat the patient or what other investigations should be done ahead of a referral.

**Q3: Please state the total cost of operating the referral management system since its introduction and how much each individual referral costs to be processed.**

The referral management centre combines a number of functions: operating the NHS Choice Policy, booking appointments, triaging/ reviewing a subset of referrals. In totality, in 2014/15, the CCG spent £2.1m on these activities and the same amount for 2015/16

The CCG do not record the cost to process each referral.

**Q4: Please state the total savings the referral management system has delivered since its introduction.**

As the CCG is in financial deficit the impact of Devon Referral Support Service has been cost avoidance rather than savings.

The cost avoidance for 2014/15 was estimated at £4.1m and for 2015/16: £5.9m

The cost avoidance represents out-patient appointments, procedures for which the CCG has a commissioning policy and the use of alternative

specialist services (e.g. GPs with special interest) in place of secondary care services.

## **Satisfaction**

I trust this matter has been dealt with to your satisfaction but if there is anything which you need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01392 205205 or by email at [d-ccg.foi@nhs.net](mailto:d-ccg.foi@nhs.net) Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you can write to the office and arrangements will be made for an independent review. You of course can write directly to the CCGs Chief Officer if you prefer using the “contact us” details displayed on the CCG website.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, you have the right to appeal again to the Information Commissioner at:  
Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF  
Tel: 01625 545 700  
Fax: 01625 524 510

## **Legal information pertaining to the release of this information**

Please note that the information being provided to you is for information only and remains subject to existing intellectual property rights; no license for the re-use of this information is given or implied through its provision to you.

Yours sincerely,

**The Freedom of Information Office  
NHS Northern, Eastern & Western Devon Clinical Commissioning Group**