

New GP Telephone Neurology Support Line for GPs!

**Call 07773583420 or Royal Free switchboard 020 7794 0500 and dial ext. 39842 when prompted
Monday to Friday 11am to 1pm**

Background

GPs can now seek specialist Neurological help and advice from senior local Neurologists working locally at the Royal Free Hospital. They can provide advice to any GP in either Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden and Islington, irrespective of where the patient may be referred to.

The support line is not intended as a replacement for "Advice and Guidance" on eRS but rather to compliment this service for those patients where the problem is more easily sorted out with a real time conversation.

The purpose of the telephone line is to support GPs in their practice and help guide and support them when considering the best treatment options for ongoing care for patients with neurological problems.

The types of queries that this helpline could deal with typically would be

- A patient with a non-urgent, but complex query, where advice and guidance via ERS and a real time conversation is required to produce the best outcome for the patient
- Where the GP is considering an acute admission but is not sure if this is really the best thing for the patient

It would not be appropriate to use the help line for acutely unwell patients or those with new onset focal neurology. These should be discussed with the on call team.

This telephone helpline will draw on the successful experience of the "Liverpool Vanguard" where this approach proved to be extremely popular with GPs and an effective way of securing the best outcome for patients, without necessarily needing to see a consultant for a face to face appointment.

How will it work?

GPs can ring the support line Monday to Friday between 11am and 1pm. A senior local consultant will be available to answer any questions you may have about the management of your patient.

If they are already on the phone, you can text or leave a message and they will call you back.

Following the conversation with the GP, the consultant will email through a completed template outlining the discussion that took place, the suggested advice and next steps. This template can then be uploaded onto EMIS so that there is a permanent record, but also so that it can be included in any future referral if relevant.

We have chosen to pilot this in the Neurology speciality in particular as the presentation and nature of neurology problems often mean that an actual conversation in real time may lead to better patient outcomes than a written exchange. We hope that through providing access to this specialist knowledge means that GPs will feel better supported to manage neurological conditions in the community, where appropriate.

Benefits

We hope that this support line will deliver the following benefits:

- Increased access to specialist neurological advice and support
- Fewer patients being referred means shorter waiting times for those patients who really need to see a neurologist
- Patients where the problem is more urgent can be fast tracked by the neurologist
- Better patient flow
- Patients seen and advised/ treated closer to home
- Increased patient and GP satisfaction

NCL STP Neurology Steering Group believe this is an innovative advice and guidance service that provides GPs with immediate and direct telephone access to local consultants, supporting the delivery of excellent patient care and promoting the primary/secondary care relationship.

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