

For the attention of: **All practices and optometrists in Coastal West Sussex**

Changes to Urgent Referrals

Please note that the fax number previously used to make urgent referrals to Western Sussex Hospitals Foundation Trust (WSHFT) (ie., Worthing Hospital and St Richard's Hospital) is no longer available. **Therefore, please be aware that new arrangements are in place with immediate effect.**

In future, all urgent referrals for patients with suspected wet AMD should be made via the Patient Choice Navigators (PCNs) that are now operating within Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (CWS CCG).

These referrals will be handled on an urgent basis Monday to Friday by the PCNs, with the patients being offered the choice of referral onward to the secondary care provider with the shortest waiting time, thereby making the best use of available resources and reducing the waiting time for all CWS patients as much as possible. When making the referral please include landline and mobile numbers for the patient, to avoid any delays for the PCNs contacting the patient. If the patient is not contactable within a few days, their referral will automatically be forwarded to a local provider with the shortest waiting times. This will include BMI Goring Hall Hospital, the Optegra Eye Hospital and WSHFT.

For practices currently holding NHS mail accounts, please email your referral direct to: **CWSCCG.providerreferrals@nhs.net**

For practices currently without NHS mail accounts, you may fax your referral to the following number (which will convert your fax to a secure email to the above address): **0207 0197421**

Please note this email address should NOT be used for other urgent referrals, e.g., retinal detachment, acute glaucoma etc. **Patients with conditions requiring immediate attention should be sent to A&E.**

Please also be aware that the fax facility that has been set up is a temporary measure for six months to allow time for those practices without NHS.net accounts to get this set up. It is important that every practice has this in place in the longer term, as the NHS is increasingly moving to paperless systems and patient data cannot be sent on non-secure email systems.

To apply for an NHS.net account, please follow these instructions:

Go to systems.hscic.gov.uk/nhsmail/using

There is a section for Pharmacists Optometrists and Dentists covering what you need to do in order to get an nhs mail account.

If there are any queries, please contact Lynn Stacey (lynnstacey@nhs.net) or Jackie Oxley at the LOC (Jackie.oxley@googlemail.com)