

Gynaecology referral issue

OCCG's main provider, Oxford United Hospital Foundation Trust (OUHFT), is currently struggling to find capacity within this service. Waiting lists are **very** long and this is causing a backlog, for various reasons, which they are now addressing urgently.

Please be aware when you are making referrals that excellent alternative providers exist for most areas of Gynaecology. Obviously, there are some OUHFT tertiary service areas within Gynaecology that cannot be directed elsewhere; this is for you to exercise clinical judgement, based on the description of services on the eRS (choose and book) sites, when making referrals.

Many Gynaecology referrals to OUHFT are currently beyond the 18 weeks target, due to manpower and other capacity issues. Patients cannot be given an appointment when they book, leading to a lot of confusion and backlog, as well as extra work in primary care.

If you can suggest alternative providers for your patients, when they see you, they may be seen much more quickly at sites that they would not necessarily consider initially.

This is especially relevant to practices that sit close to the borders of Oxfordshire county.

Alternative providers include

- The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust <http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/>
- South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust <https://www.swft.nhs.uk/>
- Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust <http://www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk>
- Stoke Mandeville Hospital <http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk>

With patients in mind, it would be extremely helpful for practices to review the services and waiting list times available at these sites on eRS, in all areas (not just Gynaecology), to ensure that you and your administration team are aware of the choices available, when advising and booking patients.

OUHFT are seriously addressing their problems, to try and improve the flow of patients who have already been referred but inevitably it will take time to see improvements in the waiting list times.

OCCG and OUHFT are working together to try and prove capacity issue at their sites but hopefully, by referrers using the entire provider capacity across the county, some of the OUHFT issues will be eased sooner rather than later.

Thank you for your co-operation in this and, as ever, if you have any questions please email planned care OCCG.plannedcare@nhs.net