

Dr Arvind Madan
Director of Primary Care
NHS England
Skipton House
80 London Road
London SE1 6LH

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Dear Colleague,

Patient leaflet – “What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a specialist”

I am writing to inform you about a leaflet that NHS England recently produced in collaboration with the British Medical Association and National Association of Patient Participation groups.

The leaflet “*What happens when you are referred by your GP to see a specialist*” has been produced in response to changes that have been introduced in the NHS Standard Contract between CCGs and hospitals in April 2016 and April 2017. This requires hospitals to take responsibility for certain aspects of patient care following a visit to hospital. The leaflet is aimed at patients and advises them of what they can expect from their GP and from the hospital when they are referred to see a specialist.

In response to a large number of direct requests for printed copies, and in order to raise awareness of the leaflet across GP practices, we are providing each practice with the first 100 leaflets for you to distribute to patients when referring. You can then download and print additional copies to meet your requirements from the following link, which also includes an A4, black-and-white version for easy local printing:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/workload/interface/resources/>

Whilst we understand that this won't immediately prevent all unnecessary work falling back to practices, patients being well informed will help accelerate embedding these changes over time. Meanwhile, please continue to notify your CCG where these changes are not happening, so that it can be raised in local contract discussions between the CCG and the hospital (all of whom have been notified of the contract changes directly).

I hope you and your patients find the information set out in the leaflet useful and it helps to prevent unnecessary GP appointments following a hospital visit.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Arvind Madan
Director of Primary Care, NHS England