

Practice Briefing

New Pathway – Fibromyalgia

Introduction

Fibromyalgia is a long term (chronic) condition that can cause pain and tenderness over much of the body. Pain, fatigue and sleep disturbance are the main symptoms of Fibromyalgia although there can be other associated symptoms. Fibromyalgia is quite common – up to 1 person in every 25 may be affected.

Although other conditions may influence some of the symptoms of Fibromyalgia there is no link with inflammatory arthritis like rheumatoid arthritis or degenerative arthritis like osteoarthritis.

There is limited evidence to support the use of simple analgesia as well as Tramadol, but the most effective interventions are education, CBT (if required) and exercise, particularly aerobic and strength training. These interventions can be arranged in primary care and do not require access to secondary care. Early treatment can improve long term outcomes.

What is It?

This new Fibromyalgia Pathway with associated Pre-Referral Guidance and form has been developed in conjunction with the Rheumatology and Pain Service at ESNEFT.

Diagnosis of Fibromyalgia is confirmed by the GP, and any interventions discussed and agreed with the patient for example referral to OneLife Suffolk, Wellbeing Services or Living Life to the Full. To support this an information booklet has been developed for patients for primary care use. For those patients who require further intervention from the Pain Service in the form of Group Pain Management Sessions, a new referral form has been developed for referrals direct to the Pain Service.

Start date

The referral form and associated guidance will be available on practice clinical systems and this practice briefing will be available on the CCG website in January 2020.

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