

Practice Service Briefing

Ipswich Hospital Virtual Fracture Clinic

Starts 5th May 2017

What is it?
<p>Ipswich Hospital will be introducing a virtual fracture clinic from the 5th of May 2017</p> <p>The current system for follow-up of patients who attend the Accident and Emergency Department with a fracture involves the follow-up of many patients who do not derive benefit from the follow-up appointment. This results in overly busy fracture clinics where there can sometimes be little time for patient care or indeed training. It also does not allow patients to be seen by the appropriate sub-speciality team.</p> <p>There are many National and also local examples of how a virtual fracture clinic is a cost effective system with high levels of patient satisfaction. It leads to a significant reduction in follow-up appointments freeing up time for those patients that need the attention. For those patients who do not benefit from the appointment this saves them time from work, time juggling busy lives, time off school, travelling and parking costs.</p> <p>The primary aim is to bring the first line management of the patients' injury to them in the comfort of their own home. Secondary benefits of this are that all primary decisions on patient management will be made by an Orthopaedic Consultant, any follow-up appointments will be made where appropriate in a generic fracture clinic or in the correct sub-speciality Consultant clinic and in either case at the appropriate time when a management decision needs to be made. This will also allow for greater standardisation of care that, where appropriate, is protocol driven and evidence based.</p>
What is NOT included?
<p>Those injuries that following presentation in A & E need to be admitted for surgery or an urgent Orthopaedic opinion will be referred to the on call team as currently happens.</p> <p>There is no walk in service provided by the Virtual Fracture Clinic. Patients who have been found to have a fracture in primary care or who have presented to their GP having sustained an injury out of area should be referred using the Review at Virtual Fracture Clinic Referral Form and emailed to ihn-tr.vfc@nhs.net.</p>
What is included – the scope of the service?
<p>All fractures that would normally be referred to the next day fracture clinic.</p>
How does it work?
<p>Patients attending the Accident and Emergency Department will have their injury assessed as currently happens. Those injuries that are known not to benefit from follow-up will be discharged with advice and an information leaflet. These injuries are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> toe fractures, finger tip injuries, children's stable wrist, undisplaced elbow and clavicle fractures adults 5th metatarsal base fractures 5th metacarpal (Boxer's) fractures ACJ sprains

minor radial head fractures.

All other fractures that would normally be referred to the next day fracture clinic will instead be referred to the next working day Virtual clinic. This clinic will be formed by the On-Call Consultant, a Trauma Nurse, a secretary and for training purposes, clinical commitments permitting, a Radiographer, an Emergency Department ENP and an Orthopaedic junior. At this time the Emergency Department notes and x-rays will be reviewed. The Consultant will agree a management plan for the patient. The potential outcomes are;

discharged after further advice,
generic clinic review,
Specialist clinic review,
Hand therapy clinic,
Physiotherapy or dressings clinic.

Following the clinic the patient will be contacted by telephone by the Trauma nurse and the plan conveyed to them. If the plan is for the patient to be discharged with advice but they wish to be seen then they will be given an appropriate appointment. Patients will be provided with a copy of their management plan as will the registered GP.

All patients are given an information leaflet and a telephone number to call, contained within the leaflet, in case of problems. As such there should be minimal impact on primary care. The number is monitored during working hours Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours patients are advised to contact 111 or the Emergency Department.

Start date

The new process will start 5th May 2017

Contact details

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