

Guide to DIRECT REFERRAL/PROF TO PROF with GP Out of Hours service

Provision has been made for pharmacists to discuss and/or refer patients directly to the GP Out of Hours (OOH) service in their board if they decide the patient needs to be assessed further before the patient's own GP surgery re-opens. This discussion/referral should be directly with the GP OOH service within your board area. The pharmacist (or the patient) **does not** need to contact NHS 24 at any stage of the process. Using the Direct Referral/Prof to Prof number where needed will improve the patient journey. Patients who require emergency dental triage however should still be advised to call NHS 24 on 111.

Guidance for referring someone to another health care provider/service

Who you wish to refer to	How to refer the patient	Why you would refer the patient here
Local board GP OOH Service	Professional to professional number	To arrange a consultation at PCEC or MIU
	Number can also be used to discuss referral options. Please do not advise the patient to contact NHS 24.	To organise a prescription for medication not eligible for supply under PGD or emergency supply legislation
	Direct Referral/Prof to Prof	
	contact numbers are issued	To query a prescription
	directly to pharmacies via their health board.	written in the OOH period
	their neatth board.	To arrange for patient to see CPN or DN
PCEC – Primary Care Emergency Centre MIU – Minor Injuries Unit CPN – Community Psychiatric Nurse DN – District Nurse		
Accident and Emergency (A&E)	Send patient direct (May require ambulance transport via 999)	A&E appropriate referrals, e.g. suspected fracture
Emergency Ambulance	Ambulance transport via 999	Serious symptoms presenting in Pharmacy
Social Services	Check local arrangements	Child protection issues Community care
Dental treatment	Advise patient to contact NHS 24	Dental triage and potential requirement for emergency dental treatment



What happens when a referral is made to the GP Out of Hours (OOH) Service?

The call to your local GP out of hours (OOH) service will typically be answered by a nonclinician who will ask for the person's name, date of birth, address, postcode, name of their doctor and practice. Use the referral form template to collect this information and record the time and location of the appointment. They may also ask for a brief description of their symptoms and how quickly they need to be seen. Most patients who have initially presented in a pharmacy would usually need to be seen within a 4 hour time frame; however, this may vary according to the demands placed on the OOH service.

The OOH service will then give an appointment time and location where the patient can best be seen. A few boards operate slightly differently to this, therefore local arrangements should be followed where they are in place.

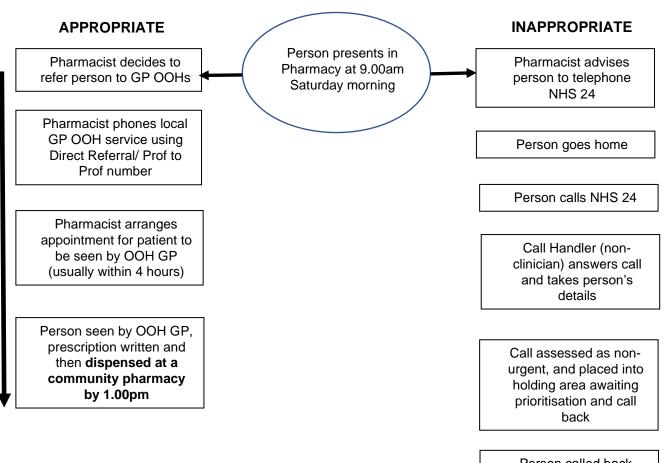
Please do not provide the Direct Referral/Prof to Prof telephone number to the general public. Also, please avoid raising patients' expectations, for example, do not tell the patient that you think they need antibiotics or that they need to be seen urgently by a doctor. Instead, tell the patient that you think their symptoms need to be assessed further.

Reasons for Contacting the OOH service

- Make an appointment for the patient who requires face to face consultation.
- Request a prescription for an item not covered by the PGD or emergency supply legislation (OOH will not prescribe substitution therapy).
- Discuss whether patient referral for an appointment is appropriate or a prescription is required for the patient's condition.
- Query a prescription written during the OOH period.



PATIENT JOURNEY



This flow diagram illustrates the difference in the patient's journey between using Direct Referral/Prof to Prof as opposed to advising the patient to call NHS 24

NHS 24 prioritises calls according to the urgency of clinical need. People with minor ailments assessed by the community pharmacist that require a face-to-face consultation in the OOH, in general, would be a low priority. At peak busy times, they could wait several hours before NHS 24 calls the patient back.

If a patient needs to access the local GP OOH service or needs to access a medicine not suitable for supply under the PGD then community pharmacists should always refer them to their local GP OOH service using the Direct Referral/Prof to Prof number

Person called back (potentially up to 3 hours later) by Clinician for assessment and triage

Clinician makes arrangement for person to be seen by board GP OOH service (usually within 4 hours)

Person seen by OOH GP at 5.30pm but, ALL local pharmacies are now closed. Prescription cannot be dispensed