

South East London Dermatology Network: Teledermatology

Patient Focus Group Feedback: December 2021

We are a partnership of NHS commissioners and providers, the boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark, and the voluntary and community sector

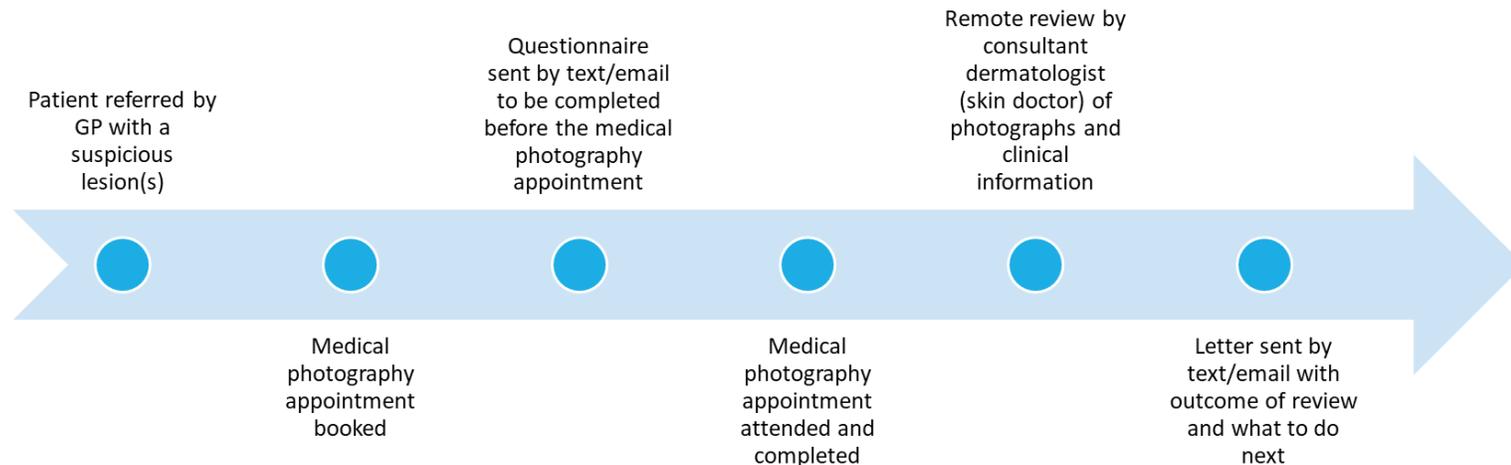
- In December, the South East London Dermatology Network, in partnership with South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), conducted two focus groups to gain input and feedback from the public regarding the proposed teledermatology pathway for South East London, due to start in spring 2022.
- The focus groups took place on 7 December 13-14:00 and the 9 December 18-19:00 using Microsoft Teams.
- The CCG sent the focus group invitation to their mailing lists, comprising of 800+ contacts.
- Guy's & St Thomas' Trust (GSTT) texted 1,060 patients who had attended outpatient appointments with skin cancer screen services within the past three months notifying them of the focus groups.
- Both asked for attendees to be aged 16-60 to attend the focus groups to reflect the patients that would meet the criteria of the pathway.
- In total 18 registered for the 7 December and five attended, and 16 registered for the 9 December and five attended.
- The proposed Patient Information Leaflet and an example of letter from an appointment was sent for pre reading to maximise feedback during the focus groups.
- The focus groups were facilitated by Rosemary Watts, Assistant Director of Engagement, with Gemma Oliver, SE London Teledermatology Project Manager, and Dr Rakesh Patalay, GSTT Teledermatology Clinical Lead, presenting the proposed pathway.

- The focus groups were set up to gain insight and feedback from the public regarding the proposed teledermatology pathway for SE London due to start in spring 2022.
- The pathway was designed by the SE London Dermatology Network which as was established in 2018.
- This is a collaboration by the SE London Clinical Commissioning Group with the three acute trusts delivering dermatology care within south east London.
- Their aim is to work together to find collaborative solutions for challenges faced by the six boroughs; Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark.
- Teledermatology was identified from evidence based practice and research of other services locally and nationally.



Teledermatology pathway

- The pathway would start by the patient attending their GP. If the patient met the criteria of age 16-50yo with two lesions (skin growth/skin change) or less, then they would be booked a medical photography appointment.
- If the patient had lesions in the nails, hands, feet, or genitalia, or had previously been seen by the service then they would not be suitable for the pathway.
- The patient would be sent a questionnaire by text or email to complete before the medical photography appointment.
- Once the medical photography appointment was completed the consultant dermatologist (specialist skin doctor) would review the information from the patient and the photographs to determine if the patient could be safely discharged back to the care of their GP, or if they needed to attend for a face-to-face appointment with the dermatology (skin) team.
- If the patient would like a full skin check then this can be indicated on the questionnaire and a separate appointment will be booked once the consultant review has taken place.



The following points were raised and discussed:

- What do you think about the pathway?
Feedback about the proposed pathway was positive. It was discussed it was an exciting and a sophisticated method of screening.
- What would be your concerns? Would this extend the time to diagnosis?
For patients on a routine pathway (18 weeks) this would significantly reduce the waiting time to diagnosis.
For patients on an urgent pathway (2 weeks), diagnosis would continue to be made within this time period and urgent face-to-face capacity created for those who need to be seen in-person.
- What time period do you expect to wait regarding the outcome of your medical photography appointment?
It was discussed the expected waiting time from the medical photography appointment to receiving the outcome letter of the appointment should be less than 2 weeks for routine pathway. This can be delayed by internal process of getting letters out but we are working on improving these issues.
- Will I receive a full skin check?
A full skin check will be offered as part of the pathway in the questionnaire and if requested you will be asked to attend at another date to complete this.

- Is it clear what will happen for you at the appointment?

It was felt the leaflet was comprehensive and it was discussed that a summary of the pathway and what would happen would be useful at the top of the leaflet for those who just wanted quick information.

Wording of when to complete the questionnaire should be clearer as it is confusing about attending 15 minutes before the medical photography appointment.
- Do you understand the information provided?

The term skin lesion (skin growth/skin change) is explained at the beginning of the information leaflet but it was felt this should be explicit in the top e.g. highlighted in a box, so patients could refer back to the meaning without having to search the text.

Visual and flow diagrams of the pathway would support those who prefer visual descriptions.

The proposed leaflet is in English and we have many languages spoken in south east London. Future work would look to leaflets in other languages e.g. the most commonly spoken.
- Do you know who the team are and how to contact them?

Yes, information clear and found on the last page.
- Does the patient information give you reassurance and confidence in the pathway?

Dr Patalay discussed the safety and effectiveness of the pathway and it was asked that a paragraph was included in the leaflet to demonstrate this.
- Would a video help?

A patient video is a must demonstrating what will happen on the pathway.

- Is it clear what the diagnosis is?
Letter gave clear information of the diagnosis and what to do next, return to GP if concerned.
Communications to GPs is a must to ensure they can explain the pathway to the patient and if the patient returns to the GP after being discharged in the outcome letter, what the GP is to do next.
- Do you understand the information provided?
Yes but keep the letter simple as only written in English and ensure commonly used terms are included with medical terminology.
- Do you know who to contact should you have questions ?
Yes, information clear and found on the last page.
- Does the letter give you reassurance and confidence in the pathway
As with the patient information leaflet, it should be stated in the letter the safety and effectiveness of the pathway.

- Thank you to all of those attended and contributed to the sessions!
- Your feedback was invaluable and we will be using this to update the Patient Information Leaflet and the patient outcome letter.
- Once the Patient Information Leaflet has been revised (after the festive period) we will send it on to you for your views.
- The recording of the sessions has now been transcribed and the recordings deleted.
- If you have any further feedback please contact: selccg.engagement@nhs.net

Thank you for your participation

