

Reducing the Admin burden of referrals: A practical guide for Primary Care



Context

As we move towards Advice and Refer models and clinical triage, this guide provides practical steps to improve clarity, reduce delays, and streamline the referral process.

A high-quality referral should allow secondary care to make a decision without further clarification.

This guide will help GP practices:

- ✓ Reduce the administrative burden of referrals
- ✓ Improve constructive advice and guidance conversations
- ✓ Reduce referral rejections



Feedback from secondary care clinicians

Common issues identified during clinical triage include:



Reason for referral unclear (Advice vs Referral)



Attachments: Poorly labelled attachments, missing pages, photos not included.



Long clinical histories or information not relevant to specialty (e.g. 15+ pages)



How to make your referral clear and effective

- ✓ Use the conversation box and include a specific clinical question when requesting advice
- ✓ Include all relevant clinical information, history, examination findings and current treatment
- ✓ Attach investigations and tests before submitting referral, as we cannot always access investigations performed outside the organisation
- ✓ Upload any attachments in pdf format when possible.
- ✓ Name the Referral attachment as clear as possible e.g. 'ENT Referral letter' to enable the clinicians to find the referral quickly.
- ✓ Indicate any additional needs that require a specific appointment type (e.g. deaf patients require face-to-face appointments or interpreters).
- ✓ For Urgent Suspected Cancer referrals please include the Pan London form and inform patients we are investigating cancer.



How to avoid common causes of rejection

- ✗ Select the correct service - Confirm via Directory of Services (DoS) that Homerton provides the service
- ✗ **Please note: We are unable to easily refer to community services outside City and Hackney**
- ✗ Enable the option to convert to referral
- ✗ Do not use Advice and Guidance for waiting list queries, direct these to the appropriate admin team

