

Your GP thinks that you may need to see a specialist.

This leaflet has been designed to help answer any questions you may have about the referral the GP has made for you.

What will happen to my referral?

To make sure that you are seen by the right healthcare professional, in the right place, at the right time, the CCG has introduced a process called **Rapid Specialist Opinion** (RSO).

A Consultant or GP who has specialist experience in a particular condition for example cardiology or dermatology will review your referral and make a specialist recommendation on what needs to happen next.

The aim is to:

- Enable patients to be seen in the right place, first time.
- Reduce the number of unnecessary hospital referrals;
- Ensure clinicians can focus on those patients with the greatest need;
- Improve waiting times for patients who need a hospital or specialist appointment;
- Supporting patients to receive treatment locally at their GP practice, where appropriate;

Referrals for the following are included in this new process:

- **Cardiology** (heart related)
- **Dermatology** (skin)
- **Ear, nose and throat services** (ENT)
- **Ophthalmology** (eyes)
- **Gynaecology** (women's health)
- **Neurology** (brain and nervous system)
- **General Surgery** (operations)
- **Urology** ("waterworks")
- **Rheumatology** (muscles and joints)
- **Orthopaedics** (bones)

This process does not include 2 Week Wait referrals for suspected cancer or very urgent referrals.

How will this affect me?

The process of getting the specialist opinion takes just a few days after the referral has been sent from your GP surgery.

If you **DO** need to go to hospital or see a specialist, you will be sent a hospital appointment at the location of your choice.

If you **DON'T** need to go to hospital or see a specialist, the RSO specialists will liaise with your GP practice to agree a plan on how to manage your healthcare locally, without the need to go elsewhere for treatment. Your GP practice will contact you to get the specialist advice put into action.

If you haven't heard from anyone after two weeks or your condition changes significantly, please contact your GP practice.

Where can I find out more?

Your GP practice should be able to answer any questions you might have about your referral.

Further information is also available on the CCG website at www.southteescCG.nhs.uk or contact STCCG.enquiries@nhs.net or 01642 263030.