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New service saves NHS an estimated £500k by helping to avoid trips to RUH

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More than 1500 patients in Bath were spared an avoidable visit to hospital when GPs used a new service to call local specialists for immediate advice, according to newly released figures.



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Consultant Connect works by giving GPs the ability to immediately speak to a local specialist, often with the patient still in the room.

This allows them to get expert advice in real time, instead of writing to the consultant and waiting days for a response or sending the patient to hospital.

In Bath, the service covers Acute Medicine, Breast Surgery, Cardiology, Diabetes and Endocrinology, Elderly Medicine, Gastroenterology, Neurology, Paediatrics, Rheumatology and Urology.

The service is also in use in urgent care, allowing GPs to talk to Urgent Care clinicians for advice prior to sending patients to urgent care facilities.

Since the phonenumber launched in December 2015, GPs from 30 surgeries across Bath have made more than 2200 calls to specialists at Royal United Hospital to get expert advice on the best care for their patients.

Consultant Connect estimates that Bath GPs and consultants have saved the NHS £591,000 by ensuring patients get the right treatment from the beginning. When local GPs used Consultant Connect, around 60 per cent of their patients avoided a trip to hospital.

“Being able to call a consultant for immediate advice while I’m with my patient is hugely beneficial to me and them. It means when a patient comes to me with unusual symptoms or a complex medical history, I have the tools to seek advice from a specialist in Bath who will guide me on how to best care for my patient.

“When my patient leaves my surgery, they can feel confident that we’ve given them the best advice,” commented Dr Boo McConnell, GP at St James’ Surgery in Bath.

Jonathan Patrick, CEO of Consultant Connect, said: “It’s fantastic that the Consultant Connect telephone advice and guidance service is having such a positive impact on the lives of patients, GPs and consultants in Bath.

“We’re delighted to help GPs provide the best possible care for their patients while enabling them to build better relationships with local specialists.”



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