

Consultant responds to a Phone Advice & Guidance call and avoids admission for an elderly patient



Dr Catherine Barnes has been a consultant for four years. She works at City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust and answers Phone Advice & Guidance calls from local GPs. The service is funded by Sunderland CCG and delivered by Consultant Connect.

Dr Barnes, a Consultant Geriatrician, has been answering Phone Advice & Guidance calls in Sunderland since the service was introduced in October 2016.

"I think the service is a really good idea. Having a detailed conversation often allows us to divert an elderly patient away from an acute admission to a more appropriate setting for them, for example a home visit or an outpatient appointment."

We asked Dr Barnes to provide a recent example of a clinical issue that she had been contacted about.

Elderly patient losing weight and collapsing at home

The Recovery at Home Team were concerned about an elderly patient, living on her own at home. She was known to have Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, but had recently become more breathless. The patient complained of weight loss and a poor appetite and explained she had been collapsing at home. She had recently been seen in the Emergency Department, but they felt that she wasn't improving.

How Phone Advice & Guidance helped:

"We arranged an urgent Outpatient Clinic appointment, which she attended. We were able to assess her, with access to her medical records and previous investigations. Blood tests, an ECG and lying and standing Blood Pressure were checked and advice with regards to changes to her medication was given. We were able to liaise with other services involved in her care.

This enabled the patient to get the assessment and support she needed without an emergency admission."

If you are interested in any aspect of the service, please get in touch:

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