

Advice from out-of-area NHS consultant prevents patient from possible stroke

Specialty mentioned: Cardiology

Dr Patrick Davey is a Consultant Cardiologist. Before joining the National Consultant Network (NCN), Dr Davey used to answer Telephone Advice & Guidance calls from local GPs at Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust (also provided by Consultant Connect). He is now semi-retired and answers Advice & Guidance calls from GPs based all around the UK. He thinks "it is an excellent service."

Dr Davey joined the NCN in October 2018 and has enjoyed speaking to GPs. He comments:

"There is no doubt in my mind that it prevents unnecessary referrals. Perhaps just as importantly, it does significantly increase the quality of medicine being practiced in primary care."

When we asked Dr Davey what advice he would give to consultants who are worried about answering calls whilst managing their normal workload he said:

"Its just so easy! I only take calls when I am able to. It is a pleasure to speak to GPs, and the calls never take long."

Dr Davey also explained that he has never had an inappropriate call from the GPs he has given advice to and that in fact, they have always been very appreciative of his guidance.

Regarding consultants who are thinking of joining but who are still unsure, Dr Davey encourages them to do so:

"Do it! It's great fun, you get to think about clinical problems that you may not always appreciate, you take to bright energetic GPs, it doesn't take much of your time, and you get paid. What is not to like?"

Dr Davey has answered many phone calls through the NCN. We asked him to provide a recent example of the advice he gave to a GP:

Consultant prevents possible stroke for patient

"A GP asking about atrial fibrillation, and general management" for a patient contacted Dr Davey. The GP did not feel that the patient "needed anticoagulation medication, at least until all the tests were in."

Dr Davey "informed him that she was at very high risk of having a stroke, and whatever the tests showed, she still needed anticoagulation drugs, and that he should consider starting today."

How Telephone Advice & Guidance through the NCN helped:

"As the tests could easily take 3-4 months, this protected the patient against a possibly devastating stroke much earlier than originally planned" Dr Davey explained.

This was "a good outcome and the GP was pleased with the advice."

If you have any questions about this service, please get in touch at hello@consultantconnect.org.uk or on 01865 261467.