

Rapid ICC Hub Advice Service for GPs and Paramedics

Jayne Gilbert is the Relationship and Engagement Manager for the North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust (NWAS). Paramedics in this area use Consultant Connect to call the Integrated Care Community (ICC) Hubs on the telephone. GPs in North Cumbria can also use the same service which is commissioned by NHS North Cumbria CCG. Jayne explains how the service both improves and streamlines patient care:

Before the Consultant Connect Advice service was introduced to NWAS in February 2019, "There was no referral pathway in place for paramedics to access ICC Hubs." Nowadays, paramedics make regular use of the service when with their patients and **their calls are connected to the ICC Hubs in an average of 10.6 seconds.**

Jayne comments that one of the benefits of speaking to the ICC Hub staff is that "Not every patient seen by an ambulance clinician needs to be taken to hospital or to see a GP."

She also points out that:

“Having access to a multi-disciplinary team who can best assess the patient’s needs and perhaps make simple interventions such as providing a lifting aid, for example, not only helps us keep patients in their own home but also enables health and care partners to perhaps intervene at an early stage and provide proactive care or advice.”

Early intervention by ICC Hubs can "prevent problems arising later on" and they can also "make a holistic assessment of the patient’s health and care needs."

In addition, speaking to ICC Hubs can be a useful tool for other clinicians who are not paramedics. NHS North Cumbria CCG is keen to encourage more GPs to use the service. Jayne says that;

“The beauty of calling the ICC Hubs is that there isn’t a definitive list of what they can and can’t support patients with - discussions are always welcome. Just call them and have a chat to discuss your assessment and concerns and the Professional of the Day will decide if the ICC Hub can provide an assessment or service that would benefit your patient. If the patient needs to access healthcare elsewhere, the ICC Hubs are also great at signposting to local services and third sector support and advice.”

Jayne also feels that Consultant Connect is a useful tool as;

“it enables us to have access to important audit data such as call volumes, numbers of successful referrals, pathway utilisation in each ICC Hub and, importantly for NWAS, a recording of the conversation between the NWAS clinician and the professional accepting the referral.”

In short, being able to speak to the ICC Hubs so quickly on the telephone allows for enhanced patient care as they are often "treated safely and appropriately closer to home" rather than at A&E. It has many advantages for commissioners, practitioners and patients.

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