

# GP uses Telephone Advice & Guidance to avoid multiple outpatient appointments

**Specialties mentioned:** Gastroenterology, Urology, Haematology

Dr James Smith, a GP in Somerset, details how contacting local consultants using rapid Telephone Advice & Guidance on the Consultant Connect App has benefitted his patients.

Dr Smith works at Frome Medical Practice, a surgery which has access to the Telephone Advice & Guidance service commissioned by NHS Somerset CCG. He uses the free Consultant Connect App to speak to specialists at Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) and has been a GP for fourteen months.

Dr Smith enjoys using Telephone Advice & Guidance on the app as he can speak:

“directly to a consultant, quickly avoiding calling through the switchboard.”

Prior to using Telephone Advice & Guidance, Dr Smith had to use slower methods for getting specialist advice.

These included contacting consultants;

“via secretaries, writing letters or calling the on call consultant or specialist registrar via the switchboard.”

Dr Smith encourages other primary care clinicians to use Telephone Advice & Guidance via the Consultant Connect App and has provided the following examples of when he has used the service to provide a high standard of patient care.

## GP gets Telephone Advice & Guidance for Gastroenterology, Haematology and Urology cases

A patient's ultrasound scan had shown an incidental finding of a renal cyst. Dr Smith used Telephone Advice & Guidance to rapidly contact a Consultant Urologist to discuss the best course of action. The consultant recommended that Dr Smith organise a CT scan and that the patient's cyst was continuously monitored using further ultrasound scans.

On another occasion, Dr Smith had organised a stool test for a patient with possible pancreatic insufficiency. He was then able to contact a Consultant Gastroenterologist to discuss possible treatment options and whether a referral was necessary.

In addition, another patient's blood test demonstrated that they had a “case of severe folic acid deficiency presenting with pancytopenia.” Dr Smith used Telephone Advice & Guidance to call both a Haematologist and a Gastroenterologist who were able to provide the appropriate advice.

## How Telephone Advice & Guidance helped:

Rapidly speaking to consultants has meant that Dr Smith could streamline the care of his patients. He comments that, in cases such as the above, he could “instigate further investigations or manage the patient's condition without the need for an outpatient appointment.” This is a much better result for the patients in question.

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