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Welsh Ambulance Services
NHS Trust

Paramedic impresses Fire Crew and arranges Helicopter using Consultant Connect App

Photo Credit EMRTS Wales

Consultant Connect began providing Telephone Advice & Guidance to the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) in Swansea in May 2020. The service was rolled out to paramedics working in different areas across the whole of Wales over the following weeks. This service, which has seen significant usage, allows users to get specialist advice via the free Consultant Connect App. We have recently been speaking to Matt Kenyon who has been a paramedic for approximately five years to find out how he finds using Telephone Advice & Guidance in the Powys area.

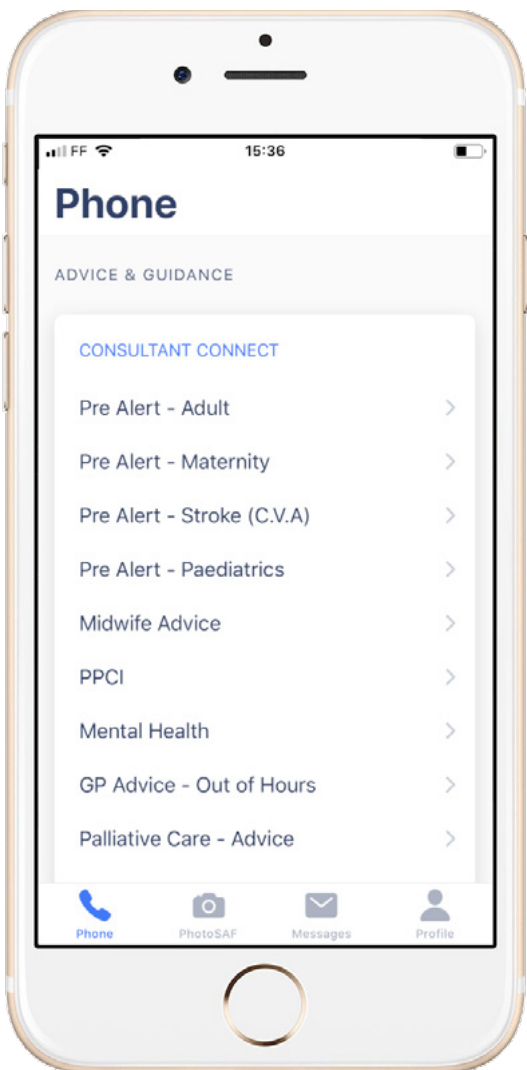
Matt says;

"Consultant Connect is easier, quicker and on hand when needed. It's right in front of you at the touch of a button. It provides paramedics with shared decision making, shared responsibility and up-to-date and important information."

In addition, Matt enjoys the fact that pre-existing phone lines have been added to the Consultant Connect App. This means that they are all available in one place and he does not have to remember lots of different numbers. By simply selecting one of these lines on the app screen, he has "the ability to speak with relevant subject matter experts, gaining appropriate information quickly and as and when needed."

Matt encourages other paramedics who have yet to use the app to do so and says;

"You can get current information, advice and share the responsibility with another experienced clinician by using the Consultant Connect App. It results in the best care and treatment for the patient, potentially avoiding putting more pressure on hospital staff."



*This is what Matt sees on the Consultant Connect App. Available specialties may differ by area.

Matt has provided the following two examples of when he has used Telephone Advice & Guidance.



Paramedic gets Advice and Guidance for patient who had inhaled hazardous gases.

"A patient had accidentally stabbed the hose in her fridge and inhaled hazardous gases. The fire service and I were dispatched. The patient was very anxious and concerned. The fire crew made the appliance safe and did numerous safety checks but were unable to identify the gas she had inhaled. Across the back of the fridge it read 'chloropentane'. The fire crew hadn't heard of it and did not know what its effects were. Neither did I. I was unable to log into the toxins database I have on my phone and thought I would seek further Advice and Guidance from a specialist."

How Telephone Advice & Guidance helped:

"I was connected straight away using the Consultant Connect App, and I explained the situation. The advisor could access the toxins database and various other sites for me. They relayed the information and we both agreed on a suitable action plan for the patient. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the patient did not want to go to hospital. We agreed with this and, due to the search conducted on the toxins database, we could safely leave the patient at home. We also told her which pertinent symptoms to look out for and to phone 999 immediately if any should arise. The fire service were happy with the outcome and impressed at the capability of Consultant Connect. I would happily use the app again should the need arise. I was extremely happy to have the information needed at the time and to be able to relay it to the patient. This enabled the fire service to clear the scene quicker and the patient was at ease due to the information received. Also, an unnecessary hospital admission was avoided."

Helicopter organised for tachycardic patient

"A biker had come off his bike at approximately 55 mph. The patient presented with a sustained tachycardia, although it was not massive. I used the Consultant Connect App to contact the Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS) and explained my findings. They agreed they couldn't make sense of the sustained tachycardia but were diverted to another patient who took priority. It was agreed that they would contact me soon after via radio and I then used the Consultant Connect App again to ring the critical care desk. We agreed that not much had changed but were still concerned for patient. EMRTS agreed and attended, discussions took place and ultimately, they decided to fly the patient. I was updated approximately 20 mins later by the critical care desk. The patient had deteriorated and was massively tachycardic, and potentially requiring whole blood products."

How Telephone Advice & Guidance helped:

"I believe the patient went to surgery for a potential spleen removal and a potential bleeding artery."

Matt continues that;

"I found it easy to use the Consultant Connect App, which is what I need when dealing with a potentially serious incident. It is always useful to have someone to bounce the ideas off and discuss. The Crickhowell ambulance crew were also instrumental, as well as the EMRTS crew."

Matt gives special thanks to Huw Jackson, the Health Board Clinical Lead for WAST in Powys, who has been particularly important during the implementation of this service. Huw has "collated the figures, explained the process and ensured we downloaded the app. He deserves to be mentioned in this article for his ongoing and continuing support."

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