

# 5 minutes with... a Dental Practitioner

**'With Consultant Connect we get rapid responses to our queries – within a day or less. This prevents delay and lets us give peace of mind to our patients because we can advise them on the next steps quickly after seeing them.'**

Ewart Johnstone is a Dental Practitioner with a special interest in Orthodontics and has worked at Gwaun Cae Gurwen Dental Practice in the Swansea Bay University Health Board (UHB) area for 32 years. Since early 2022, Ewart has been able to send Messaging Advice & Guidance requests to Orthodontic specialists in the area via Consultant Connect.

We asked Ewart to tell us about his experience of the service, including benefits to clinicians and patients.

## **1 How would you contact specialists for Advice & Guidance prior to the service being available via Consultant Connect?**

'Prior to the e-referral system being put in place, we would send written letters to specialists, try to provide as much information as possible within the letters and then wait for the patient to be made a treatment planning review at the hospital service, for which we had no information on waiting times. When the e-referral system was available, we would send the referrals through the system, including photos etc., and then the specialists would review the referral treatment plan and either 'accept' or 'reject' or 'reject with a comment'.'

## **2 What are the benefits of seeking Advice & Guidance via the messaging feature on Consultant Connect?**

'With Consultant Connect we get rapid responses to our queries – within two weeks or less. This prevents delay and allows us to keep patients quickly informed on their treatment, reducing patient queries and pressure on the practice reception with phone call queries.'

When we look at wasted time and delays in the system, it is often patients calling us to get an update on their condition following their appointment. Being able to relay the advice from the specialists back to the patient within a day or two of their appointment reduces our delays and frees up our processes.'

## **3 Do you find the service easy to use?**

'The service is straightforward to use. The link to the Consultant Connect platform is saved on all surgery computers and I have the app on my phone. All I need to do is log in to start a message. When I get a response to a query, I receive an app and email notification.'



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## 4 Do you often include images or files with your queries?

'Yes, I do. We can upload images and files, such as x-rays, and attach these with our messages. It's easy to do on the Consultant Connect platform and means the specialist reviewing the case will have all the information needed to provide us with advice about our patient.'

## 5 What types of queries do you send via the service?

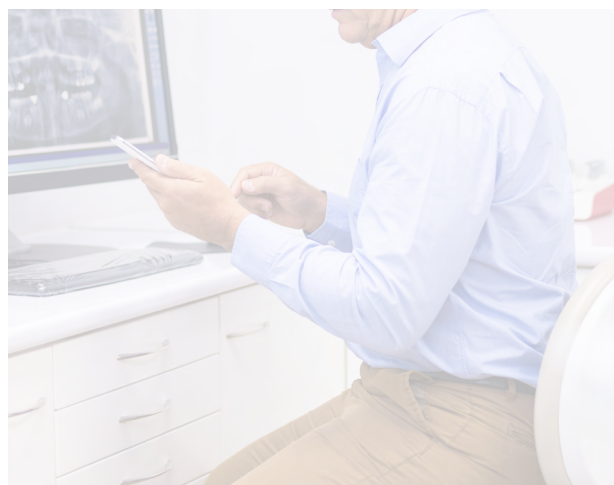
'As a Dentist with a special interest in Orthodontics, I often send Advice & Guidance queries relating to patient treatment plans.

I'll also send through queries for advice relating to the extraction of deciduous teeth for example. In these cases, I'll ask the specialist if they think it is appropriate to take this deciduous tooth out early to try and promote eruption of another.'

## 6 Do you have any other feedback?

'One aspect of the Consultant Connect service that is really useful is that we can download the full Advice & Guidance conversation (messages and images) and include this in the patient clinical records.

This means if another Dentist or registrant has to see that patient they can easily see the conversation that was had, when it was had, any images or files that were included and the outcome of the interaction - it's an additional body of clinical record evidence which is superb and I think that is invaluable.'



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