

## Teledermatology – Patient information

### Why have I been referred to the teledermatology service?

GPs diagnose and treat some skin problems themselves. However on occasion they may wish to refer your skin problem to benefit from a skin specialist (consultant) opinion. The teledermatology service utilises modern technology to obtain a rapid diagnosis and treatment plan for your skin problem without you having to attend a hospital.

### What does “Teledermatology” mean?

Teledermatology involves using a camera to take high quality digital pictures of your skin. These images are then sent electronically, with further information contained in the referral letter, to a skin specialist (Dermatology Consultant). The Dermatology consultant will diagnose your skin problem and provide recommendations on any treatment required. The teledermatology service enables you to be seen quicker and at a place closer to your home.

### What happens?

Once you are at the GP practice the healthcare professional will provide you with a consultation and offer you a skin examination if its required. The clinician will:

- Take relevant medical history
- Take a photo of affected areas of your skin using a digital camera for large body areas
- This will then be relayed (using a secure information system) to a specialist skin consultant

The consultant will then make a diagnosis and send this to your GP within **five working days** outlining a recommendation to:

- Make clear if the condition needs to be treated
- How the condition should be treated
- What kind of medications can be used

If your condition requires face to face assessment or you do not wish to have your photo taken, your GP will refer you to the hospital outpatient service. You will be provided with details to book the hospital appointment.

Your GP will continue to manage your skin problem using the advice received from the consultant and can seek further advice from the consultant if it is needed.

If the consultant feels your condition is urgent, he/she will refer you directly to a hospital of your choice. It is important to note that at any point along this pathway, if your condition is suspected to be urgent or a possible cancer, you will be referred as using through the urgent cancer referral pathway (2 week cancer pathway)

### Education and training

Photographs taken may be used for education and training purposes. If you would prefer for your photo not to be used in this way, please inform your GP.

### **Where can I get more information?**

NHS Direct – Phone 111 Website: [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

British Association of Dermatologists Phone 020 7383 0266 [www.bad.org.uk](http://www.bad.org.uk)  
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