

Trust Headquarters
Torbay Hospital
Loves Bridge
TORQUAY
TQ2 7AA

Email: douglas.natusch@nhs.net

Website: www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk

29 March 2019

**** Please note this is an updated document, enclosing an updated pathway, reflecting LMC agreements****

Dear Colleague

Spinal pathway refresh and relaunch – 1 April 2019

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust (TSDFT) has refreshed the commissioned 2003 spinal pathway guidance, for relaunch on 1 April 2019, replacing all existing processes across the system. The purpose of refreshing the pathway is to standardise spinal service access across Devon STP for services aligned to spinal surgery at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital; to adhere to NICE guidance; to establish more affordable spinal and medical imaging models and to support sustainable demand management within these areas.

In practical terms, the introduction of the refreshed spinal pathway means that GPs will no longer have requesting rights for Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) for back pain and will refer into physiotherapy as primary access to secondary Care.

The refreshed pathway is on page 2, please familiarise yourself with the process. The refreshed pathway functions in a similar way to the MSK hip and knee pathway, where patients attend a community physiotherapy service and then if appropriate, physiotherapists refer the patient onwards to the spinal ESP service. Spinal ESP colleagues will be the secondary care point of access to orthopaedic and rheumatology services. The physiotherapy and ESP teams have been increased in order to support this pathway. DRSS will be updating the booking protocols in order to support the implementation of this pathway.

GPs continue to be able to contact secondary care specialities directly. If you require further information, guidance or advice about a patient or the correct pathway for a patient - including if a patient is thought to represent an exception to the normal pathway - please contact colleagues at TSDFT via the SAICO (seeking advice in the ICO) service:

- Spinal Clinic physio.torbay@nhs.net
- Rheumatology rheumatology.sdhct@nhs.net
- Pain Clinic sdhct.painmanagement@nhs.net
- MSK Radiology team radiology.sdhct@nhs.net

Yours sincerely

Dr Douglas Natusch

Consultant Pain Medicine

Clinical lead for Pain Services, South Devon & Transformation Project, Spinal Services, TSDFT

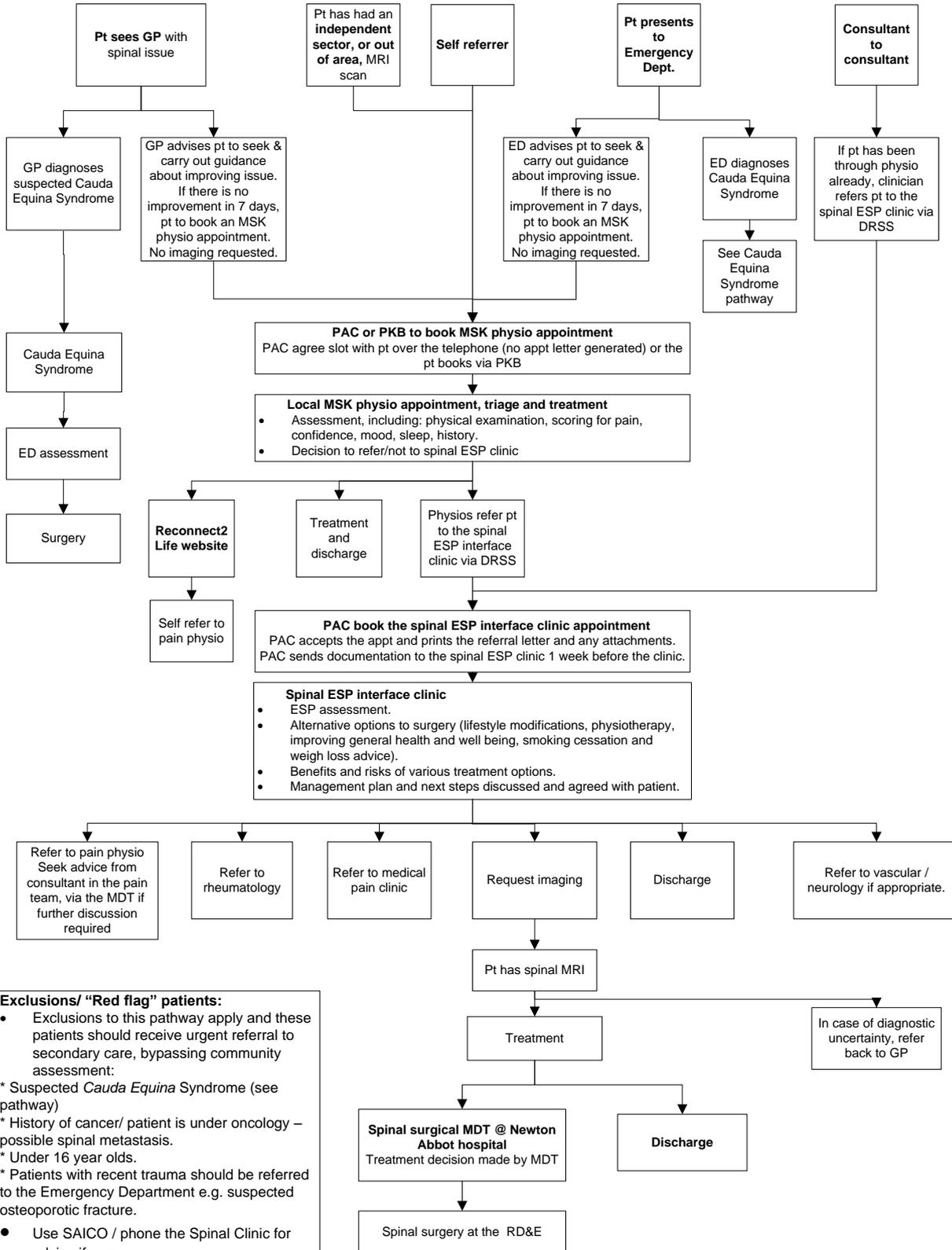
Spinal

Process flowchart

Process owner: Douglas Natusch | Version 5.0 | Updated 28 March 2019



Torbay and South Devon
NHS Foundation Trust



Exclusions/ "Red flag" patients:

- Exclusions to this pathway apply and these patients should receive urgent referral to secondary care, bypassing community assessment:
 - * Suspected *Cauda Equina Syndrome* (see pathway)
 - * History of cancer/ patient is under oncology – possible spinal metastasis.
 - * Under 16 year olds.
 - * Patients with recent trauma should be referred to the Emergency Department e.g. suspected osteoporotic fracture.
- Use SAICO / phone the Spinal Clinic for advice if necessary.
- Use SAICO Rheumatology and Pain Clinic for advice if necessary.
- Use SAICO for MSK Radiology team radiology.sdhct@nhs.net if necessary