



## Patient travel cut down thanks to service

The **Advice and Guidance** service, which has recently been rolled out to rheumatology services, is a locally-developed system enabling GPs to have a secure electronic ‘conversation’ with a hospital specialist. This enables them to obtain advice for patients, without the need to refer a person for an outpatient appointment.

“The **Advice and Guidance** service has helped patients get access to care more quickly and closer to home. Instead of waiting for an outpatient appointment, the service means that GP colleagues are now extended members of the team and can run tests and start treatment at an earlier stage.”

*Dr Marwan Bukhari, Consultant Rheumatologist at UHMBT*



During April 2017, 537 ‘conversations’ took place between GPs and hospital specialists via the service. Initially 260 of these people were to be referred to outpatients; however, due to the advice from hospital specialists, 75 people were managed under the care of their GP in the community.

93% of GPs find the service either useful or very useful.



“I am quite pleased that you and my GP organised all the needed tests before I got here, it meant that he could reassure me and that when I got to the rheumatology clinic we could have a management plan without waiting for more tests.”

*Patient feedback*

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