

# Podiatry Self Referrals

Information for health professionals



## Introducing Self-Referral to Podiatry Services

Livewell Southwest is pleased to announce that potential new patients, or their carers and relatives, can now refer themselves to Podiatry Services if they are registered with a GP in the Plymouth, South Hams or West Devon areas.

### Why?

The benefits of self-referral are numerous and well documented by NHS England and this move to self-referral is part of the transformation requirements laid out in the 2022/23 Operational Planning Guidance <sup>1</sup> which aims to “expand direct access and self-referral where GP involvement is not clinically necessary”. Further, “expanding direct access and self-referrals empowers patients to take control of their healthcare, streamlines access to services and reduces unnecessary burden on GP appointments”.

### How?

Prospective patients can now complete on-line self-referral via our website without prior approval or review by a health professional and health professionals in primary care can signpost patients to the self-referral website in response to e-consultations and the like. Colleagues in primary care etc may still wish to send a referral themselves for complex matters or where clear medical and social information is necessary to be included, and we will continue to welcome professional referrals.

1. See: [www.england.nhs.uk/operational-planning-and-contracting/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/operational-planning-and-contracting/)

## Self-Care & Other Resources

In support of other professionals, we have a wide range of self-care and education materials available on our website for a wide range of foot conditions and foot care difficulties, as well as information on transport options and for those with footcare needs the NHS does not locally provide for, information on accessing alternative providers of Podiatry care.

## Telephone Access

We recognise that not all members of the public will be able to use online services and so there is a telephone self-referral option. We are keen to encourage those who can use the online form to do so, freeing the telephone line for those patients who genuinely cannot use the website and we would appreciate colleagues encouraging this too.

**Telephone self-referrals:** 01752 434100

## What if the Patient Doesn't Meet Criteria?

Patients who self-refer but do not meet the criteria for care by the service, will continue to receive self-care, health education materials and alternative provider signposting as appropriate to their general needs. Health professionals may also like to consider signposting patients they consider may not meet our access criteria to the public website detailed below, where they can find these materials and further guidance.

## Urgent Help

Safeguards have been built into the system as is common with other self-referral and e-consultation systems to direct patients with an urgent medical matter to appropriate sources of help. This includes screening for sepsis and medically urgent foot and lower limb presentations such as Charcot Joint and critical ischaemia.

## Public Self-Referral Link

The public can access the self-referral website here:

[www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/podiatry-making-a-self-referral-for-yourself-or-another-person](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/podiatry-making-a-self-referral-for-yourself-or-another-person)

## Health Professional Links

Referral information, referral forms, access criteria, and health education and signposting materials, for health professionals can be found here:

[www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/podiatry-advice-if-you-are-a-health-professional](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/podiatry-advice-if-you-are-a-health-professional)

## Contact Us

For health professionals with questions about accessing Podiatry Services, our criteria, and supportive materials for health professionals and the public, please contact the service using these details:

Podiatry Services  
Beauchamp Centre  
Mount Gould Hospital  
200 Mount Gould Road  
Plymouth PL4 7QD

**T:** 01752 434855

**E:** [livewell.podiatrypatients@nhs.net](mailto:livewell.podiatrypatients@nhs.net)

**W:** [www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry](http://www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry)