

## Case Study - Electronic Referrals benefits the Chronic Pain service in Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board

Electronic referrals have proved to be beneficial to both clinical and administration teams in the MCAS (Chronic pain) service in the health board.

The Welsh Patient Referral Service (WPRS) enables electronic referrals to go directly from GPs to clinicians. The clinicians can carry out a number of electronic actions with each referral, including prioritising, returning to the GP (with an explanation), and redirecting to other services or clinics.

The Chronic pain service is delivered over multiple hospital sites across the health board. When the referrals were paper based, the referrals would be sent to the main administration team in Neath Port Talbot hospital, but would need to be sent to other hospital sites across the health board leading to delays in the patients being triaged. As Emma Preece from the management team confirmed “The admin team would touch a referral maybe three or four times, now they no longer touch a referral”.

Dealing with multiple sites also meant that some referrals would go missing. As Emma explained “We used to spend maybe two or three hours a week contacting GPs asking for copies of referrals and we no longer need to do that”.

The electronic service has also benefitted the clinicians within the service. Hannah Stockham one of the clinicians told us “We receive just under two thousand referrals on a monthly basis. Since moving to the electronic system we can triage the patients rapidly and access any referral quickly”. This differed from the paper system when clinicians needed to wait for paper referrals to arrive at the different health board locations, where they would triage and then send them back to the administration team.

“It has saved us time and money” Emma concluded “and the patients are getting a faster service”.

WPRS is just part of the functionality available through the Welsh Clinical Portal, which is available across Wales.