

What is the new Brent Referral Optimisation Service?

Referral Optimisation Service (BROS) is a behind-the-scenes process for receiving and processing non-urgent referrals from GPs to secondary care services such as hospitals.

Bexley Health Ltd delivers this service in Brent.

Introduction

What does this involve?

The BROS will make sure that all necessary referral information has been included so that when a GP makes a referral a decision can be made about the most convenient and appropriate service for the patient to be seen at. This could be at a hospital or in the community.

The referral information will be pulled together to try and arrange the best possible triage for the patient.

What does this mean for me as the patient?

- You will be able to be treated at a venue of your choice.
- You will not have to explain your condition or symptoms over and over again because the information will be correctly recorded on the shared database.
- You will be treated at the venue which is the most convenient for you and means that you will save time, money and energy in travelling for treatment when you don't feel well.
- Your transport can be booked at the same time

How does this new system increase patient choice?

This new system is expected to increase patient choice in the following way:

- Patients will be able to exercise their choice by being able to choose where they would like to be treated.
- Doctors will be able to support the patient's choice by including the information as part of the referral.
- The BROS Team will be able to offer additional choice if the patient's first choice is not available.

What information is usually included in a referral?

- Full patient details, including current address, mobile and home telephone numbers and whether the patient has agreed for a message to be left on an answer phone or with the family
- Patient's NHS number (and hospital number if known)
- Details of the presenting complaint;
 - the duration, course and severity of the clinical episode
 - what treatments have already been given

- copies of the results of any relevant examination or investigations e.g. blood tests, ecg or radiology
- History of allergies or hypersensitivities
- Significant/relevant past medical history
- Current/repeat medication
- Smoking status – essential for respiratory, cardiology referrals
- Current BMI i.e. no more than two years old, more recent preferred – essential for orthopaedic referrals for problems with weight bearing joints
- Relevant social circumstances and any special considerations – e.g. patient with sensory disabilities, patient that needs interpreter, patient requires transport.

How will the GPs make the referrals?

All the GPs have been trained on the national electronic referral service (e-RS) process.

Do all GP practices use the ROS system?

Not at the moment but the new provider will be meeting all of Brent's GP practices to explain the new system to them and encourage them to use it to provide even better services to their patients.

Can the BROS overrule any of my GP's decisions?

No, the ROS will only work with the information the GP shares about you through the Brent wide shared database used by all of the practices.

How many staff will be employed to deliver the BROS?

There will be: 14 clinical staff and 12 non-clinical staff working across Brent to help patients get better quickly through referring to the right place at the right time.

What if I don't speak English?

The BROS has the ability to communicate with patients with over 100 languages by accessing interpreter services.

Are there any services not covered by the BROS?

Yes - 2 week wait cancer, people experiencing rapid chest pain clinic and referrals to the early pregnancy unit

The following areas have been excluded

- Early Pregnancy Unit
- 2-week wait referrals for suspected cancer
- Rapid Access Chest Pain Clinic
- Urgent District Nursing referrals (24/48 hour visits)
- STARRS Rapid Response
- Urgent duty psychiatrist referrals

Triage

What is clinical triage?

This is a process where a referral is reviewed and a decision is made by a clinician about the best place for the patient to be seen and whether they need any further tests that the GP can refer to before onward referral.

It's about finding the right care for the patient at the right time.

What is non-clinical triage?

This is a process where triage is undertaken by a non-clinical person. In regard to BROS, this will involve ensuring administrative completeness of a referral prior to triage and onward referral. This means that the referral has all the elements of an optimal referral.

How were patients involved in making the decision to procure this new service?

There were a number of patients, patient groups and representative groups like Healthwatch Brent who were involved in a number of discussions and public events.

Patients were also involved in helping to decide who should provide this service for the Brent Clinical Commissioning Group.

Making Appointments

How will I be contacted?

You will be contacted within 5 working days of your GP making the referral by the BROS Team.

If you cannot be reached the BROS will try and telephone you at least three times. If you cannot be reached by their third attempt they will make an appointment on your behalf. If this arrangement is not convenient you will have the option of re-arranging the appointment to a more convenient time and place.

Who do I need to call to re-arrange the appointment?

You will need to call the BROS directly on the number provided on the letter or left on the voicemail.

What hours will the BROS be open?

The service hours of operation will be 0800-2000 hours. The service will be contactable to GPs and patients from the hours of 0800-1800 Monday to Friday and 0900-1300 on Saturdays.

There will be no service on Sunday.

What happens if there are no suitable appointments for me?

The BROS will be able to call all the local hospitals to check whether there are appointments available and to make sure that all the hospitals have kept them informed of available appointments.

How do I cancel an appointment?

You can call the BROS directly to cancel an appointment.

How will the BROS ensure their information is accurate?

The BROS will work closely with all the local providers.

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