

### **What is MATS?**

The purpose of the MATS and Spinal service is to manage the care of patients with musculoskeletal and spinal conditions to ensure that they are on a clinical pathway that best meets their needs. The service achieves this through taking a holistic approach to patient assessment and management and enabling patients to make informed decisions about their care.

### **Am I suitable to be seen by MATS?**

If you are over 18 and your GP has determined that you may need to be seen by a specialist then you are suitable to be seen by MATS. If you are under the age of 18, then you are not suitable to be seen by MATS.

### **What happens when I am referred to MATS?**

When your referral is sent to MATS, a clinician will look at it (triage) and decide whether the problem is something which MATS can help you with, or whether you should be seen by a hospital consultant directly. If it is decided that you should see a MATS specialist, you will be contacted by a MATS coordinator.

### **What happens if MATS decide that I should go straight to see a hospital consultant?**

If, when the MATS clinician triages your referral, they decide that you should be seen by a hospital consultant directly this means that you will not need an appointment with MATS. The triage clinician will refer you on to the service that they believe will be most able to help you and they will arrange for you to have an appointment. If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to call us and one of our staff will be happy to talk things through with you.

### **If I need to be seen at MATS, will I get a choice of locations for my appointment?**

Yes. When you are contacted by a coordinator to arrange your appointment they will go through the choices of clinic locations that we have. These currently include:

- Hampton House
- Fishponds Primary Care Centre
- Whitchurch Health Centre
- Westbury on Trym surgery
- The Cherington Practice

These clinics are not all available for all specialists.

### **Who will I be seen by at MATS?**

The MATS team includes a Consultant Physiotherapist, specialist GP's, Extended Scope Physiotherapists and Extended Scope Podiatrists who all work together to provide a coordinated service.

- Extended Scope Physiotherapists and Podiatrists are specialists who are able to undertake additional duties such as ordering x-rays and blood tests, giving joint injections and referring on to other healthcare professionals.

### **If when I have been to MATS, they decide that I need to be seen by a hospital consultant, will I get a choice of hospitals to be seen at?**

Yes. When you are seen in MATS by a clinician and it is decided that you will be sent to see a consultant, your clinician will discuss your choices. In general, choices include:

- Emerson's Green NHS Treatment Centre
- Bristol Royal Infirmary
- North Bristol Trust (Frenchay and Southmead Hospitals)
- GP Care

If this is not mentioned in your appointment, the coordinator will contact you about your choice.

**Why am I not able to go to my preferred choice of hospital for my procedure?**

Different hospitals offer a different range of treatment options and do not always offer all procedures. When your hospital appointment is arranged, admin staff will go through the choices that are available to you. If the place that you would like to go to for your treatment is not listed as a choice, then it is likely that it does not currently offer your procedure.

**I have been trying to call you. Why can't I get through to anyone?**

Phone calls often take quite some time because of the discussion about choice. This means there may sometimes be delays in getting through to someone.

**Contact details**

The MATS and Spinal service is based at:  
Hampton House  
Level 1  
Cotham  
Bristol  
BS6 6AU

If you would like to contact the administration team, please contact:

Telephone: 0117 330 2645  
Fax: 0117 330 2648

**Patients guide**

**MATS\* and Spinal Service**

**Helping patients with musculoskeletal  
and spinal problems**

**\*MATS stands for:  
Musculoskeletal Assessment and Treatment Service**

*Helping you to live life well*