

DocSpot Exercise Referral Scheme

Information and guidance for referring health professionals

DocSpot aims to provide practical support for Solihull GP practices and other services to encourage and enable their patients to participate in regular physical activity. The 12 week exercise referral scheme offers local people a chance to improve their health and lifestyle and aims to help participants develop the skills and knowledge to support regular physical activity and achieve long term behaviour change. This scheme is funded by Solihull Council and referring patients onto the scheme is free for your practice.

DocSpot is available to sedentary or inactive individuals aged 16 and over, who live or work in Solihull, and have an existing health condition or other risk factors for disease.

This includes those who:

- Have a medical condition that needs specialist advice and monitoring (for example, people with type 2 diabetes or cardiovascular disease) **and/or**
- Have been assessed as being at high risk of causing harm to their health and wellbeing (for example, people with hypertension, high cholesterol, high BMI) **and/or**
- Have not benefited from lower-intensity physical activity interventions (for example, brief advice/intervention).

The DocSpot scheme is available at local leisure providers and is led by fully qualified exercise referral instructors, who work with each patient to design an appropriate individualised physical activity programme. All protocols used within this scheme represent the current best-known practice and meet with national guidance from the Department of Health and NICE.

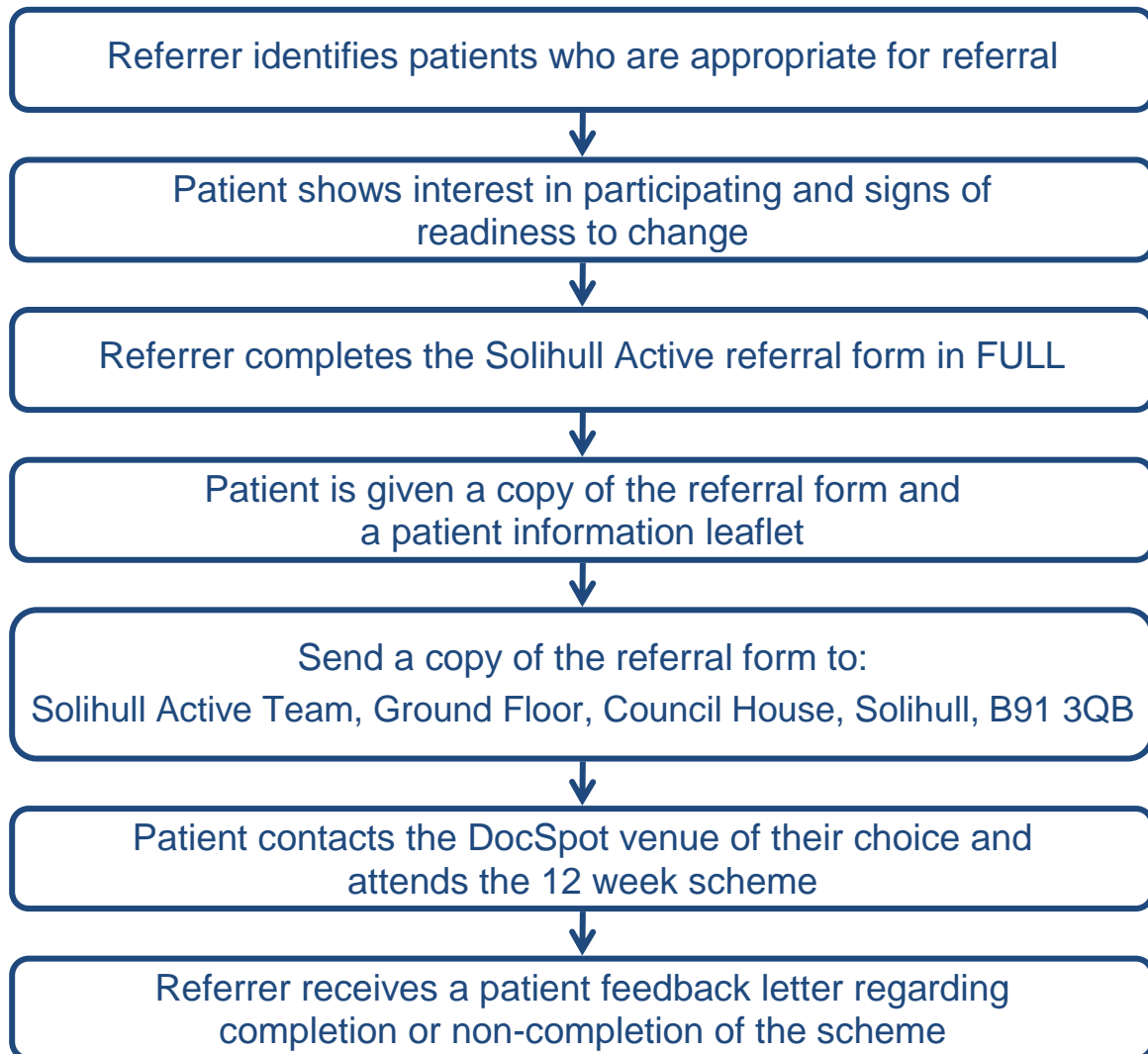
How your patients could benefit from the exercise referral scheme:

- Inadequate physical activity is a direct risk factor for CHD and stroke, whilst also contributing to obesity and hypertension.
- Regular physical activity can decrease the risk of developing CHD, stroke and type II diabetes by up to 50% and reduce the risk of premature mortality by 20-30% (BHFNC exercise referral toolkit).
- Physical activity can help prevent and manage over 20 conditions and diseases including CHD, some cancers, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders and obesity (Department of Health, 2011).
- Physical activity can significantly improve both physical and mental wellbeing and decrease all-cause mortality (NICE, 2013).



The Referral Process

Referrals can be made by clinicians working in primary or secondary care, including GPs, consultants, nurses and physiotherapists. Referring clinicians must be registered with the relevant professional body and have appropriate qualifications and accreditation for the role they perform. Clinicians must also have access to patients' medical records, ensure patients meet the referral criteria and retain overall clinical responsibility for their referred patients.



Patients will receive their physical activity sessions at the reduced price of £2.50 per session (prices are subject to change and reviewed annually). The current DocSpot venues are:

Tudor Grange Leisure Centre: (0121) 705 6371.

North Solihull Sports Centre: (0121) 770 3822.

Smith's Wood Community Gym: (0121) 779 2986.

The Hampton Health Club: 01675 443 464 (monthly tariff applies).

To request further DocSpot literature, including referral forms and patient leaflets, please contact the Solihull Active Team on 0121 704 8207 or solihullactive@solihull.gov.uk.



Appropriate Referrals

Inclusion Criteria for the DocSpot scheme:

- ✓ Patient is aged 16 years and over.
- ✓ Patient's health status would be improved by moderate intensity physical activity.
- ✓ Patient is identified as having a risk of >15 in ten years (CHD risk scores).
- ✓ Patient's medical conditions are stable and controlled.
- ✓ Patient suffers from chronic medical conditions such as asthma, COPD, diabetes, joint or musculo-skeletal disorders.
- ✓ Patient is hypertensive – but has a resting blood pressure no higher than 180/100mmHg.
- ✓ Patient suffers from anxiety, stress or depression.
- ✓ Patient requires weight reduction and/or maintenance and has a recent BMI of ≥ 30 .
- ✓ Patient is at high risk of osteoporosis, which may be delayed by weight-bearing exercise.
- ✓ Patient is at high risk of developing diabetes.
- ✓ Patient has had a cancer diagnosis – including patients who are pre-treatment, undergoing treatment & post-treatment.
- ✓ Patients who have suffered a recent cardiac event (last 6 months) that have successfully completed a Cardiac Rehabilitation programme.
- ✓ Patients with severe COPD that have successfully completed a pulmonary rehabilitation programme.

Inappropriate Referrals

Exclusion Criteria for the DocSpot scheme:

- ✗ Patient is under the age of 16 years.
- ✗ Patient is already physically active, i.e. already achieving 150mins activity per week.
- ✗ Resting systolic blood pressure ≥ 180 mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure ≥ 100 mmHg.
- ✗ Uncontrolled/unstable angina.
- ✗ New or uncontrolled arrhythmias.
- ✗ Uncontrolled resting tachycardia ≥ 100 bpm.
- ✗ Unstable diabetes.
- ✗ Unstable/acute heart failure.
- ✗ A recent (within last 6 months) significant change in a resting ECG, recent myocardial infarction or other acute cardiac event.
- ✗ Acute/uncontrolled psychiatric illness.
- ✗ Symptomatic hypotension/patient experiences significant drop in BP with exercise.
- ✗ Experiences pain, dizziness or excessive breathlessness during exertion.
- ✗ Febrile illness.
- ✗ Active foot problem, e.g. ulceration.
- ✗ Established cerebro-vascular disease.
- ✗ Any unstable/uncontrolled condition.



Roles and Responsibilities

The specific nature of the exercise referral process as opposed to the general recommendation of exercise requires mutual understanding and recognition of the specific roles, responsibilities and relationships between partners in this exercise referral process.

The role of the health care professional:

- To make a referral into the scheme taking into account the inclusion and exclusion criteria provided, and to retain **overall clinical responsibility** for the individual patient.
- By making the referral to the DocSpot scheme **the health care professional is not assuming responsibility for the administration or delivery of the programme.**
- The guidelines stipulate “that there must be meaningful transfer of relevant information to the person who will be conducting the exercise intervention. **The responsibility to ensure that this happens rests with the referring clinician**, who will make a professional judgement as to what information must be disclosed to the exercise professionals to enable them to tailor a safe and effective exercise programme that will meet the needs of the patient or client.” (NQAF, 2001).

The role of the exercise professional:

The DocSpot scheme exercise professionals are responsible for the safe and effective management, and the design and delivery of the physical activity programme. All of the exercise professionals working within the scheme are exercise referral specialists, REPs registered and committed to on-going CPD.

In all cases if there are any queries or if any further information is required referring health professionals and exercise referral professionals should communicate directly with each other (please see page 2 for all contact details).

The role of the patient:

Responsibility for participating in the physical activity programme and following the programme design and guidance rests with the participant. Patients must give their **informed consent** within the limit of their competence to do so, whatever that limit may be, and to the best of their knowledge. Informed consent must be obtained from a carer or another appropriate person if the participant's competence to give informed consent is limited.

In the case of any other health professionals identifying potential patients that may benefit from participating in the scheme, an informal referral may be made to your GP practice recommending inclusion into the scheme.

