April 2023

Dear Colleagues,

Community Paediatric Arrangements for New Private Patients

We are aware that waits in the NHS has led to an increasing number of families and carers seeking a diagnosis and treatment for their children using private services.

Having received a number of enquiries, we are writing to you to clarify the arrangements between the Community Paediatric (CP) services and private services.

**Position on the Community Paediatric Waiting List**

If a child is referred to Community Paediatrics for assessment, once triaged and accepted, that child and family will receive notification if they are accepted on to the CP waiting list for assessment.

If the family then chooses to use private resources available, this will not change their position on the CP waiting list.

**Provision of Medication**

The shared care protocol currently in place between GP practices and the CP service is an NHS mechanism to allow easier access of families to medication. This mechanism is not currently accepted between GP services and private services.

If a patient is initiated on medication in the private sector this will not be continued by the patient’s GP through a shared care arrangement and should be continued through the private services at the expense of the family

Parents should be advised to continue approaching their private clinician for on going prescriptions and be informed fully on the implications of this and their personal responsibility for ensuring their children get the correct monitoring and follow up with the private services.

Community paediatrics or the patient’s GP will not prescribe any medication until assessed and reviewed by an NHS community paediatrician.

If already referred, the child will retain their original place on the CP waiting list and be offered an appointment in chronological order.

Once a child is assessed and appropriately diagnosed in Community Paediatrics, and the treatment plan approved, the CP service may then offer to take over prescribing of any medication if appropriate. Shared care arrangements with the GP may be put in place.

At this point, there is an opportunity for private services to be withdrawn if that is the family’s wishes.

