



Welcome to our latest newsletter

In this edition we update you on the development of services, including new community clinics and foot and ankle pathways; introduce our new Interim Clinical Director, Dr Ragnar Ingvarsson and Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Mr Satish Ganesan, talks about his community spine clinic. We also have a success story from a recent SMSKPE patient to share. We hope that you will find these articles interesting and relevant, but do let us know what you think.

Since April 2015, Sussex MSK Partnership East has received and processed 36,506 referrals. During the same period our Extended Scope Practitioners have seen 10,045 patients. Since October 777 patients have been seen by Orthopaedic Consultants in community based clinics.

In the last couple of months we have extended both the clinical and geographical reach of our community clinics, which gives patients greater choice of when and where they want to be seen. Hailsham now has a community clinic based at Quintin Medical Centre, which is already proving popular with local patients. A hand and wrist clinic has also opened at Eastbourne in addition to the existing Crowborough community clinic. We have launched the foot and ankle pathway and Podiatry ESP Graeme Hadlow is now seeing patients at the Eastbourne community clinic. You can read more about this further on in the newsletter.

Finally, there are places on our course, Sharing decisions, communicating risk, on Wednesday, June 15, 9.00-4.30pm at Ivy House, Eastbourne. It is run by Dr Malcolm Thomas, GP principal and trainer with EPI. Lunch and refreshments are included. If you would like to attend please contact Jo Dorrill on [01323 819871](tel:01323 819871) or email jo.dorrill@sussexmskeast.com



MSK Partnership East appoints new clinical director

Dr Ragnar Ingvarsson, Consultant Rheumatologist, has been appointed as Sussex MSK Partnership East's Interim Clinical Director.

Ragnar's role is to provide clinical support and direction to the Partnership's clinicians and administrative staff.

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Speaking about his appointment Ragnar said: “This is a real opportunity to develop new ways for clinicians in the local health community to work together for the good of our patients. I am particularly keen to provide a support service for GPs so that they can always get prompt advice and guidance on any MSK matter. I am already offering this for Rheumatology and am working with specialists from other disciplines to help them offer a similar service.”

Another key project is to put in place a framework to support Extended Scope Practitioners with education and training to maintain competency and develop further skills.

Alongside this, Ragnar plans to create a “hotline” that Extended Scope Practitioners can call for a quick response during a patient appointment. Ragnar commented: “There are times when an ESP may want a quick bit of advice or to ask a question of a specialist before making a decision about the patient’s next steps. If this can be resolved there and then, the patient can move along their care pathway without delay.”

Ragnar will be in post until mid-July when he will return to his native Iceland. “My final task as Interim Clinical Director is to recruit my permanent successor. Clinicians who are interested in the position are very welcome to drop me a line or give me a call and I will be very happy to tell them more.”



Case Study: Patient with long history of hip pain

Margaret Stirmeay is an active 67 year old grandmother living in Eastbourne. After a long history of hip pain, Margaret was referred through Sussex MSK Partnership East to see Extended Scope Practitioner, Matt Daly, at his clinic in Eastbourne. Here she talks about her experience of the Sussex MSK Partnership East service.

“I have always enjoyed a full life, but the pain in my hip was really getting to me. I couldn’t walk further than half a mile and had to use the car to pick the grandchildren up from school. It was affecting my sleep and I hated having to take so many tablets.

“I was delighted to be referred to Matt Daly as he was genuinely interested in my condition and spent a lot of time with me, researching new ways to help me deal with the pain and was keen to find a cause.

“After various treatments, he referred me to the Eastbourne District General Hospital for an injection into my hip. In the event, this was not carried out but subsequently another MRI scan was requested, this time of both hips and the pelvis. The scan showed up inflammation of the sacroiliac joint and a guided CT injection into the joint was carried out.

“It is too early to say I am cured, but I feel so much better and I am now down to a single small dose of co-codamol a day. I can see the light at the end of the tunnel and am now well on my way back to walks with my husband.

(Case Study: Patient with long history of hip pain) continued from page 2

“Being able to visit Matt at his Sussex MSK Partnership East clinic was great. Although I like the hospital in Eastbourne, this was less stressful and not as time consuming. The building on Wartling Road was easy to find my way around and the setting was more intimate. Also, there were no parking fees!

“I am very grateful to Matt for spending so much time with me. He was very persistent and didn’t give up, and I felt he was creative in the things he tried. I benefitted from the fact that he was able to make referrals directly to other clinicians too. I thought the service focused on me as a patient. Matt saw me as an ‘expert by experience’ and spent time listening to me, explaining what he was doing and supporting me the best he could.”



New community clinic opens in Hailsham

A new clinic has been set up at Quintin Medical Centre in Hailsham by Sussex MSK Partnership East, the local NHS service for patients with bone, joint and muscular problems.

Patients have a 30 minute appointment with a specialist clinician known as an Extended Scope Practitioner (ESP). ESPs are physiotherapists who have advanced knowledge of musculoskeletal problems and work closely with orthopaedic, rheumatology and pain consultants.

One of the first patients to be seen at the new clinic in Hailsham was Christine Ann Patrick who lives in Polegate. She has been having problems with her neck and shoulder following a riding accident last year and was referred for further investigation by her GP.

She said: “After my GP referred me I expected to have to wait for ages and then go to the hospital in Eastbourne. But my appointment came through very quickly and it was very easy to get to Hailsham. It is also a lot more relaxing to come to a lovely medical centre like Quintin than attend a hospital clinic.

“I had a half hour appointment with Matt Daly, Extended Scope Practitioner, who was extremely helpful and I feel reassured that I am getting the right advice and treatment. I think this community clinic for people with problems like mine is a great idea,” commented Mrs Patrick.

Matt Daly is an Extended Scope Practitioner with Sussex MSK Partnership East. He said: “MSK stands for musculoskeletal which covers a huge range of bone, joint and muscle conditions, including arthritis, sports injuries and back problems to name but a few.”

Patients are initially referred to Sussex MSK Partnership East by their GP. Once referred, the Partnership looks after them throughout their treatment and organises all their follow-up appointments.

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Community clinics are also held in Eastbourne, Crowborough, Peacehaven and Seaford and the Partnership is looking at a number of other sites for community clinics in order to offer more choice to patients.

“Our goal is to deliver high quality health services close to where people live and work. The more we can treat people in their community the better, both for patients and the health economy,” commented Mr Daly.



New Foot and Ankle specialist at Sussex MSK Partnership East

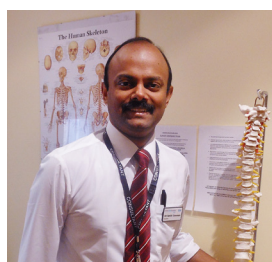
Graeme Hadlow is an Extended Scope Practitioner within the new Foot and Ankle Service at Sussex MSK Partnership East (SMSKPE).

His role is to assess and manage patients who have been referred to the foot and ankle service because first line interventions have been unsuccessful or there is diagnostic uncertainty. As an ESP Graeme is qualified to request appropriate diagnostic imaging, blood tests and carry out procedures such as guided injections and referrals for surgery when necessary. This means that most patients can be treated in a community setting rather than having to go to hospital.

There are many advantages for the patients who are seen in a community setting through the SMSKPE pathway, rather than in hospital. Graeme said: “Patients will be seen quickly and usually conveniently closer to their home or workplace. They receive expert evidence-based opinions from clinicians who have access to investigations including x-ray, ultrasound and MRI. This service model provides a good patient experience, is cost effective and can reduce the waiting list load upon hospitals and staff. It’s a one stop shop service for MSK patients.”

Alongside his role with SMSKPE Graeme is a clinical MSK lead for the podiatry team for East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust and teaches MSK practice to undergraduate podiatrists. He graduated in Podiatry and holds a master level diploma in Clinical Biomechanics. He has a special interest in injection therapies for pain management and intends to complement this with a qualification in ultrasonography to enhance his practice.

Graeme came into podiatry and MSK medicine from a sport and fitness background and as a qualified running coach, is well-placed to assess injured patients who want to get back to full fitness.



Q & A with Mr Satish Ganesan

Mr Ganesan is a Consultant Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon with East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust and a Consultant with Sussex MSK Partnership East’s Spine Service. He has a specialist interest in adult degenerative spinal disorders.

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What is your role with Sussex MSK Partnership East?

I provide a service for patients with neck and spine conditions that need investigation and/or treatment by a specialist spine surgeon. Since October last year I have been running a regular clinic at Sussex MSK Partnership East's Community Clinic located on Wartling Road, Eastbourne.

What are the advantages of seeing patients in a community setting rather than in hospital?

It's a nicer setting - much smaller than the hospital, less crowded and therefore easier for patients to find where they are going, so many find it less stressful. There's the added bonus that they don't have to pay to park. Although one or two have been a bit surprised to see a Consultant Surgeon out of a hospital setting, in general they seem to appreciate the convenience of having an appointment closer to where they live or work.

At what point in the patient's journey do they see you?

Most of the patients I see in the community have presented with lower back pain, sciatica or neck pain and been referred to Sussex MSK Partnership East by their GP. Their referral will have been reviewed by an Extended Scope Practitioner (ESP) within 24 hours. If the patient has a condition that would benefit from swift intervention they are referred directly to me and I will see them as a priority. More often though my patients will have been seen by an Extended Scope Practitioner and had an MRI which has indicated that they have a condition that needs further investigation and/or treatment by a spinal surgeon.

What is your view on triage by Extended Scope Practitioners?

For spinal patients it seems to be working very well indeed. The specialist spinal ESPs have a very good knowledge of spinal conditions and following their assessment and investigation are able to offer suitable patients an option of conservative management including referral to physiotherapy and pain services before seeing me. They would promptly refer to me patients who have complex presentations, those who have failed conservative management and those who would benefit from prompt surgical intervention, so it's really very efficient for patients and clinicians alike.

What can GPs expect from Sussex MSK Partnerships East's spine service?

They can expect to receive timely feedback about their patient's care pathway and be kept informed of significant steps. Patient communication is managed by the Partnership's team of Patient Care Advisors and patients are encouraged to direct any queries relating to their MSK condition to the team which hopefully takes some of the pressure off GP practices.

Sussex MSK Partnership East is formed of the following organisations