Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) pathway leading to improved timely diagnosis of thrombosis

WESTERN GENERAL HOSPITAL LOTHIAN

Same Day Emergency Care/ Rapid Assessment and Care Unit (RACU)

The Same Day Emergency Care Unit at the hospital has a well-defined deep vein thrombosis pathway which was embedded within its service at inception.

Following data analysis, it was found that patients were having to visit their GP, then visit the hospital and for the most part return the following day for a scan if that was indicated.

The team introduced a professional-to-professional telephone consultation service between primary and secondary care. This meant for patients with a high risk DVT where a score had been calculated by the primary care assessor, they could be given a direct to scan appointment cutting out the need for the additional assessment in secondary care.

As a result, this:

- Improved the number of same day scans performed.
- Built stronger relationships between primary and secondary care.
- Reduced carbon footprint of the pathway by 1000s of carbon miles.
- Improved confidence in interim anticoagulation within the community

All whilst reducing the cost of the pathway to both patients and the care delivery organisation.

In addition, point of care D-dimer testing machines were introduced to cut laboratory testing of 90 minutes causing unnecessary delay in diagnosis, to just six minutes, and reduced unnecessary testing at triage and streamlined patient assessment.

Data shows the pathway has:

- Saved over 2,000 patient appointments (10% of previous appointments).
- Saved over 4,000 hospital journeys and reduced travel for a huge proportion of patients.
- Reduced use of interim anticoagulation, saving costs and reducing risk to patients.
- Improved time to scan.
- Time spent in department illustrates patient time saved at 179 minutes.
- From 1st September – 24th December 2024, 96.2% of patients surveyed gave praise for the Rapid Access Care Unit (RACU).

The service design is now being shared with others.