

20 March 2020

To:
Medical Directors and Surgical Leads,
Vascular Consultants
General and Operational Managers
Of NHS trusts in South London, North West Kent, Surrey,

Summary – Due to the coronavirus outbreak, we are establishing a new emergency vascular surgery pathway at arterial and local sites in the vascular networks covering south London, north west Kent and Surrey, commencing 26 March 2020.

New arrangements have been agreed for treatment and referral of urgent and emergency vascular patients from local hospital sites to arterial centres. These follow in the attached document.

Changes to the pathway

- Patients in networks presenting with life or limb threatening emergencies will require immediate transfer to an emergency department with an arterial hub (Frimley Park, Guy's and St Thomas', King's College Hospital, and St George's Universities NHS Foundation Trusts). Transfer requests will be determined by vascular consultants at the arterial sites.
- Patients who are aged under 70 (in accordance with most recent national ITU guidance) **and** have no significant cardiac co-morbidities should be referred to an arterial centre for further treatment according to the attached criteria.
- Patients offered certain treatments previously may now be offered best medical treatment or palliative care, depending on circumstance. Where it is possible to offer best interventional care, this will be done. Patients outside of the given criteria will be reviewed through a daily consultant MDT to assess the availability of safe pathways and treatment options.
- Because of the demand on services, non-urgent, elective work will be reduced to free up capacity for higher risk patients.

Patients affected – The criteria and pathway are applicable to:

- Amputations
- Aneurysms
- Carotid
- Critical limb ischaemia
- Deep vein thrombosis
- Venous leg ulcers

Clinical information – As always – but in particular with these changes – we request that **all referrals contain the necessary clinical information** to ensure rapid and effective triage. This will help to identify patients for prioritisation.

[Enquiries](#) – Please direct non-clinical enquiries to the vascular networks manager daniel.malyenn@gstt.nhs.uk. For clinical enquiries please contact to your vascular clinical lead.

Sincerely,



Rachel Bell,

Vascular Consultant, Clinical Director of Cardiovascular at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundations Trust, South East Vascular Network Director.



Professor Peter Holt,

Vascular Consultant at St George's NHS Foundations Trust, South West Thames Vascular Network Director.



David Gerrard,

Vascular Consultant and Clinical Director for Vascular Surgery at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust.