



HOW CONSULTANT CONNECT IS SUPPORTING DERMATOLOGY REFERRALS IN CALDERDALE

Consultant Connect has been available in West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board since October 2022, providing clinicians in Calderdale with access to the IG-secure clinical photography feature, PhotoSAF, via their smartphone.

We spoke with Carrie Bottomley, Apprentice Healthcare Assistant and General Practitioner's Assistant at Bankfield Surgery, to find out how PhotoSAF fits into her everyday role and benefits her patients.

How does PhotoSAF fit into your job role?

'When a patient presents with a skin condition, they will usually first be seen by a GP, who will decide whether they require a referral. If a referral is necessary, the GP will send me a task via our system, and I will contact the patient to book an appointment convenient for them. This is always made within two days of seeing the GP to ensure a timely service.'

During the appointment, the patient will then have their skin condition photographed by me. With the patient's consent, I take as many photos as needed, using a dermatoscope attached to my phone and save them within the Consultant Connect App.

Because the photo session is automatically sent in a secure PDF to my NHS email address, I can then attach these to the referral paperwork and send them to the specialist.'

What are the benefits of having access to PhotoSAF?

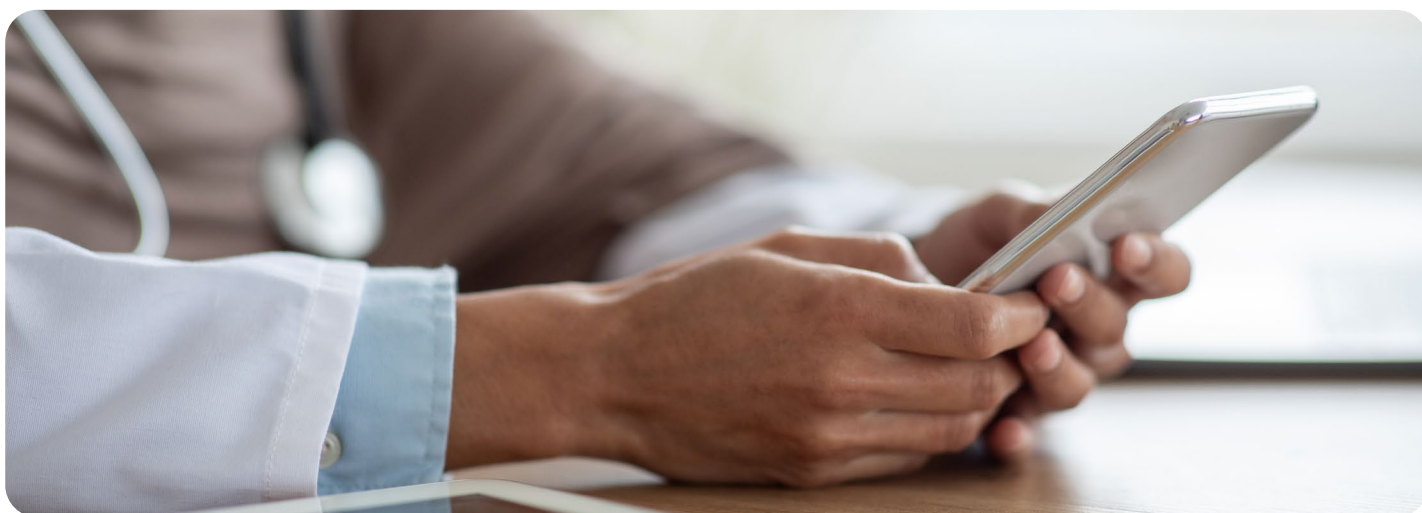
'Before having access to Consultant Connect, patients with skin conditions would be referred with no supporting imagery. Now, being able to take high-quality patient images in this way to attach to a referral ensures documentation of a potentially life-threatening condition, ahead of the patient seeing a specialist.'

'I've seen patients after their procedure or first appointment, and they feel like the service reduces the wait time and that their condition is taken care of quickly. **Taking clinical images is now a vital part of the procedure, and patients have said they feel like their condition is being dealt with before their initial specialist appointment.**'

What advice or reassurance would you give GP surgery staff who are hesitant to use PhotoSAF?

'I was apprehensive at first, but I had a demo from our Consultant Connect Account Manager via Teams, and it's easier than I thought it would be. **We've had good feedback from the patients, and both clinical and non-clinical staff at our surgery think it's brilliant.** It works so quickly, and because I can use the app on my phone with confidence, it's easily accessible. It's working so well in our surgery; I probably use it around 15 times a week.'

'When we're seeing patients who are very anxious to get a management plan underway, the support of these photos is so helpful. **It puts the patient's mind at ease for what they're going through and takes a maximum of five minutes.**'



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