



# HOW ADVICE & GUIDANCE IS BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Enhanced Advice & Guidance provided by Consultant Connect has been connecting clinicians with specialists for rapid advice since 2016 in Northamptonshire ICB via telephone, photo and messaging. However, the service is not exclusively for Primary Care and is utilised by a variety of different NHS healthcare professionals, including nurses, pharmacists and physician associates.

We spoke with a clinician at Berrywood Hospital, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, to find out how Enhanced Advice & Guidance helps them provide holistic care for their mental health patients with physical health conditions.

## Northamptonshire stats\*:

**Over 100 calls** made for physical Advice & Guidance by mental health clinicians |  
**More than 6,000 calls** made for Advice & Guidance by physical health clinicians

## What are the benefits of using Enhanced Advice & Guidance provided by Consultant Connect?

'Initially, Enhanced Advice & Guidance was recommended to me by a colleague, which came to light after a discussion regarding mental health patients with physical health issues and how we can communicate more effectively.

**'Enhanced Advice & Guidance is the most direct way of communicating with specialists, rather than calling through switchboard.**

All the information I need is held within the app; I simply select the specialty, enter the patient's NHS number and the call goes straight through to the specialist, cutting out the middleman.

'For acute lines, such as Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC), it is much more convenient than previous methods. Before Enhanced Advice & Guidance was implemented, the only way of speaking with specialists in SDEC was via the hospital switchboard, but I would spend a long time waiting to be connected, and sometimes the line would ring out. **When using Enhanced Advice & Guidance, I don't need to wait to be passed around in order to quickly speak to colleagues; it really works.'**

## Patient Example

'As well as Telephone Advice & Guidance, I've also used the ECG Messaging Advice & Guidance line, which is especially fantastic. With their consent, I'm able to securely send a patient's ECG for a specialist opinion. Before Consultant Connect, we didn't have the ability to send ECGs in this way.

'I recently sent a patient's ECG for interpretation via the app and received a prompt and detailed response, setting out points for consideration. The cardiologist advised that the ECG was not concerning, but they put together a management plan in case the patient's physical symptoms deteriorated. **The service is so good, and it's excellent that we can receive this kind of detailed feedback.**

'If a mental health patient is experiencing a physical health issue that we're unclear about how to manage, we can use Consultant Connect to get specialist advice. **This is really beneficial and is the best option for the patients; it's quick and reliable.'**



\* Data from September 2022 – September 2023.

### For more information:

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