



CASE STUDY:

HOW CONSULTANT CONNECT TECH ENABLED WAST CLINICIANS TO AVOID HOSPITAL VISIT FOR VULNERABLE CANCER PATIENT

Since 2020, Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust (WAST) clinicians have had access to Enhanced Advice & Guidance via Consultant Connect, enabling them to **quickly speak with specialists over the phone to discuss patient care**. Our recent summer 2024 feedback survey found that **73% of WAST clinicians would recommend Consultant Connect to a colleague**.

One of these clinicians is Shaun Martin-Brand, an EMT* based in Powys Teaching Health Board who uses Consultant Connect and we spoke with him to find out why his experience has been so positive.

'I've been using the service for two years via the Consultant Connect App; **it's so straightforward and easy to navigate**. A lot of calls I place are to pre-alert lines, to notify colleagues at the hospital that a really unwell and time-critical patient is being conveyed. This ensures that a trauma team can be on standby for arrival and that the patient's care is expedited. Using Consultant Connect to call specialists is much easier than trying to maintain and locate individual contact numbers – it's foolproof.' - Shaun Martin-Brand.

All calls made via Consultant Connect are recorded for IG purposes and can be downloaded at any time on your desktop. Have you ever listened back to any of your calls?

'No, I've never needed to, but it's so reassuring to know that I can listen back to reflect on a case or to verify or clarify the advice received. **It makes it a lot easier to evidence my actions**, which is a great safety net.'

Alongside Telephone Advice & Guidance, via the Consultant Connect App, WAST clinicians also have access to pre-programmed Bypass Numbers, **allowing them to skip the queue on switchboard** and speak directly to staff at local GP practices for same-day emergency communications.

Patient Example

'There are numerous examples of patients who have benefited from us having access to this service: patients for whom, due to other comorbidities, hospital is not the best place for their care can stay at home because we can contact their GP. GPs often know the patient and their history well and, with access to their records, provide solutions we haven't thought of. This means that antibiotics can be prescribed, and relatives can collect and deliver them to the patients, **saving a trip to a busy hospital, where patients would likely be waiting a long time to be seen.** Also, Powys is a remote area; travelling to the nearest hospital is an hour round-trip, from where the patient must organise transport home, which costs time and money.

'Recently, I visited a patient who was really unwell from the side effects of cancer treatment, but because they were immunocompromised, we didn't want to transfer them to hospital. I used the Bypass Numbers feature on the Consultant Connect App to speak with their GP, who knew the patient's history well, and arranged for them to conduct a home visit the same day. This meant **the patient could stay at home, avoiding a likely very busy A&E department with long waiting times** where they would be susceptible to infection. Instead, they could be close to their own facilities and assessed by their GP on the same day for medication. This was invaluable and definitely would have been a better experience for the patient and their relatives.'

* Within WAST, due to their scope of practice, EMTs can only contact GPs when authorised by a senior clinician or when crewed with a paramedic.



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