

Ipswich Fracture Liaison Service (Secondary care)

Background

Fracture Liaison Service (FLS) is a secondary care model established in 2003. The service was based on the model established in Glasgow in 1999. The Ipswich FLS was established in secondary care after Dr Gavin Clunie put out a questionnaire to all local General Practitioners – who all wanted the service to be secondary care led.

Once the Dual X-ray Absorptiometry (DXA) scanner was purchased using funds from the Local Osteoporosis Society Volunteers and Legacy Funds, the go ahead was given for the service.

Post fracture patients over the age of 50 years were captured via the orthopaedic wards, fracture clinic and latterly vertebral fractures from radiology lists. There is also a direct access to DXA service where GP's and other hospital consultants can refer directly to DXA and receive a report.

Current Practice

All men and women with a fracture over the age of 50, but younger than 76 are all offered an appointment in the FLS. At this appointment they have a DXA scan where patients are investigated on a case by case basis and interventions suggested. Those patients who fracture over the age over the age of 65 (or younger where appropriate) who are admitted with a fracture are assessed for falls and fractures by the orthopaedic elderly care team. Some of these are also seen in the FLS.

Men and women (50-75) who fracture and attend fracture clinic are also offered an appointment in the FLS. Those older patients are sent a letter (copy sent to the GP) for the GP to initiate treatment for osteoporosis assuming the fracture was a result of a low trauma fall. The patient is then followed up by the community osteoporosis nurse.

Exceptions to the service are those patients with major trauma (road traffic accidents) and those patients with skull or facial fractures.

Outcome and Impact

The FLS at Ipswich hospital trust reflects the current guidelines from the National Osteoporosis Society '*Effective Secondary Prevention of Fragility Fractures: Clinical Standards for Fracture Liaison Services*'. By implementing the FLS, the service has demonstrated a cost saving benefit to the local health economy of Suffolk through a reduction in fragility fracture incidence.

Follow Up

Patients seen in the FLS and who need treatment for osteoporosis are followed up at three months and 12 months and the correspondence from these appointments states the next date for a follow up DXA if and when appropriate.

The service at Ipswich NHS trust was award 'Gold' from the International Osteoporosis Foundation Capture the Fracture initiative in 2013.

The service is now led by Dr Suzanne Lane. There are 3 part time radiographers, 2 part time nurse specialists and a full time administrator.