Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

IMPROVING OUTPATIENT SERVICES
Council of Governors – 5th September 2018

James A. Thomas, Director of Operations
Julie Morland, Outpatients General Manager

Objectives of the Session

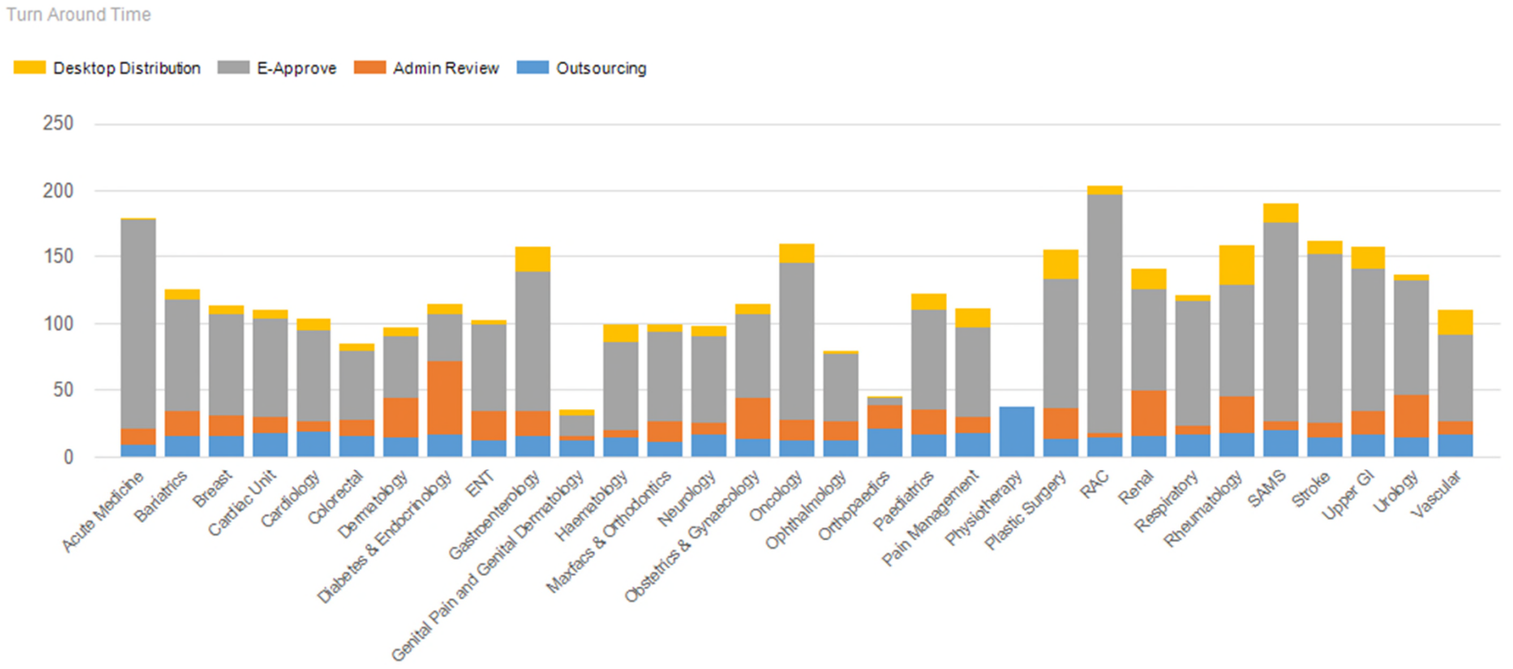
To understand

- Timeliness of outpatient clinic letters
- Current status of shift to NHS Electronic Referral Service
- Duplicate clinic appointment letters
- Letters to correct appointment venue
- Actions to reduce short notice clinic cancellations
- Appointment letter review
- Ongoing improvements
    - Partial Booking of appointments booked by ASPH Appointment Centre
    - Review of text message content

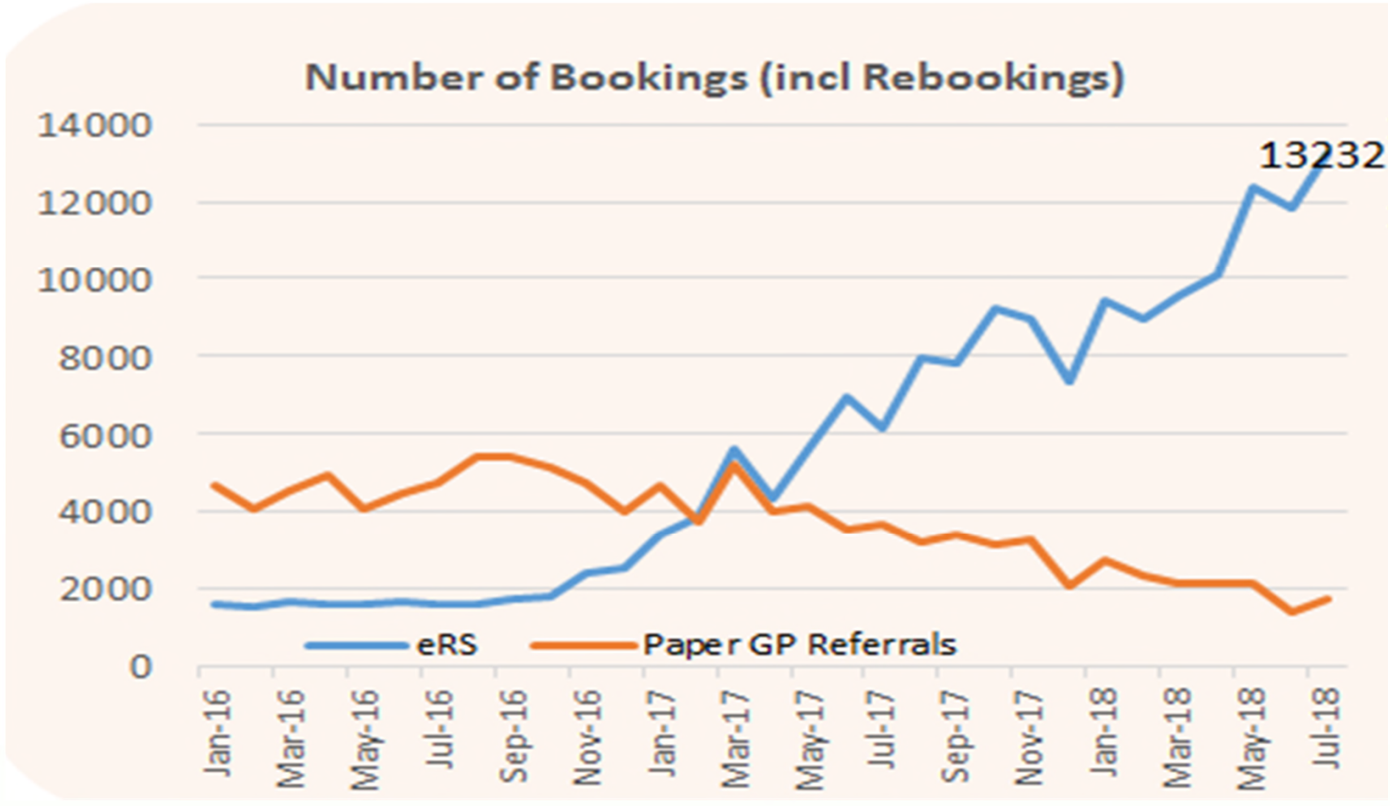
Timeliness of outpatient clinic letters

- Circa 35,000 outpatient clinic letters per month
- Electronic letter production now provides performance KPIs and visibility at all production stages
- 7-day turnaround requirement where GP initiation of treatment is required.
- Further technology development planned:
  - Instantaneous voice recognition.
  - All electronic letters direct to patient app.

June 2018: Average turnaround times by stage of production (completed Jobs)



NHS Electronic Referral Service



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e-RS – Electronic Referral Service

- 99% of referrals to consultant services now through e-RS
- *'ASPH has the highest utilisation for any Trust that went live in July. Congratulations to the team as the trust are head and shoulders above many others'*
- Patient booking through Referral Support Service within CCG, however patients do have the option to reschedule on-line
- Next steps include move to patient or primary care online booking of consultations

e-RS – Electronic Referral Service 2

Letter Duplication

- Letter sent from e-RS to confirm appointment and letter from Hospital System confirming clinic location, hospital information and clinic specifics
- Some bringing forward of appointments has been required.
- National e-RS system changes planned for 2018/19 could allow closer integration with hospital PAS letters
- Embrace future digital opportunities

Letters to correct appointment venue

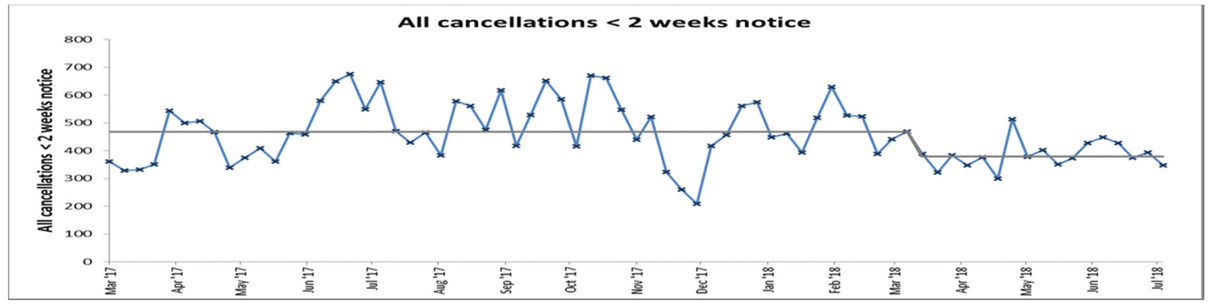
- In response to patient and clinician complaints regarding appointment letter directing patients to incorrect venue
- Outreach clinics set up as hospitals on PAS system
- PAS pulls outreach clinic as the venue to attend
- No further complaints since this process change

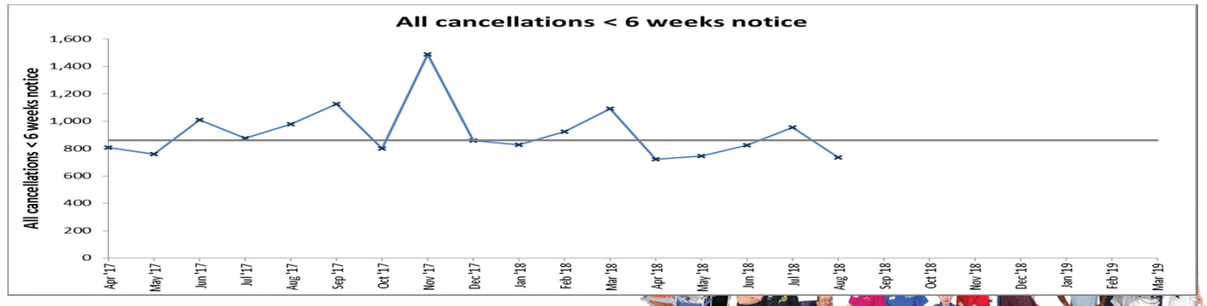
Short Notice Clinic Cancellations

Since November 2017:

- Centralised clinic cancellation and authorisation process through Appointment Centre and Operational Management teams
- ADOs overseeing short notice leave requests
- Trust-wide communication reminding of leave policy and cancellation of clinical commitments
- Weekly scrutiny of all short notice cancellations with ADOs at Trust Performance meeting
- Complete revision of PAS cancellation codes

Short Notice Clinic Cancellations 2





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Text Messaging Service

- Reminder text messages sent at 168 hours
- Reviewed following PALS concerns and latest research (Kings Fund)
- “We are expecting you at (Site) for your (Specialty) appointment on (date) at (time). Not attending costs the NHS £160. Txt ‘YES’ to attend ‘REBOOK’ to rearrange ‘CANCEL’ if not needed”
- Covers all outpatients including therapies
- Investigating text message reminder service for Imaging
- Extending to all elective surgical admissions

Appointment Letter Review

- 443 outpatient letters on the PAS service
  - Confirming new appointments
  - Confirming follow-up appointments
  - Diagnostic appointments
  - Managing patients who Did Not Attend
  - Rescheduling appointments (Hospital and Patient)
- 1st stage review complete for Orthopaedics, Pain, Rheumatology and Physiotherapy
- Review by patient panel
- Continue staged review by Divisions to update and reduce overall number of letters

Further ASPH Booking Improvements

Standardise rollout of partial booking

- Reduce DNA rate further
- Reduce PALS/complaints
- Improve patient experience
- Reduce waste in admin resources