

Patient satisfaction with an innovative multidisciplinary pathway in the management of Trigger Finger

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Background

- Trigger finger is a common orthopaedic condition that requires multiple clinic appointments.
- Management of this condition adds to the significant challenges with orthopaedic clinic capacity which has had a considerable backlog even prior to the Covid19 disruption.
- We have implemented a unique multidisciplinary (AHP) Allied Health Professional-led pathway at DGRI to treat trigger finger patients outwith the traditional orthopaedic pathway. In our pathway, the surgeon sees the patient only to perform surgery.
- This project evaluates patient satisfaction with this new pathway. We also reflect on the improved service efficiency and cost savings that have been achieved.

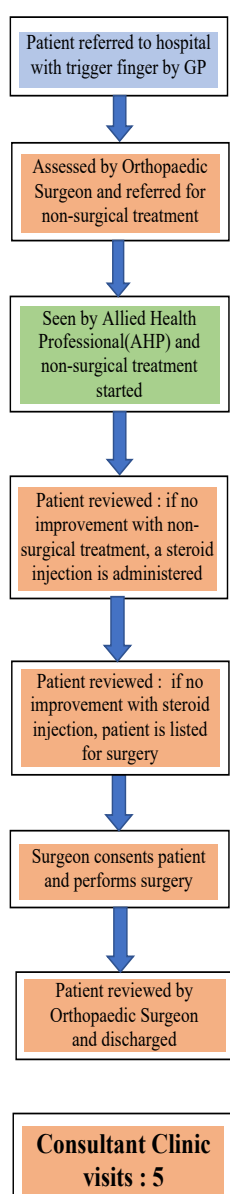
Methods

- We retrieved data of all patients who underwent trigger finger surgery over a 7-year period (Jan 2014 - Jan 2021) from theatre records.
- All patients treated through the AHP-led pathway were contacted via telephone to assess patient satisfaction.
- Patients who were successfully treated with non-surgical treatment alone were excluded from this study. This data was difficult to retrieve due to inadequate coding of outpatient data.

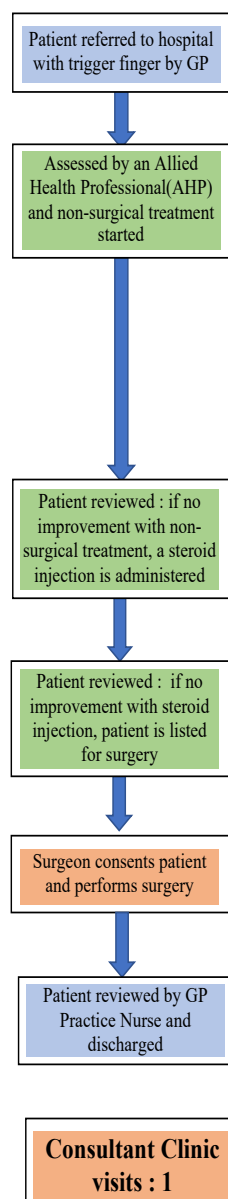
Results

- Total number of operated patients : 198
- Traditional Orthopaedic pathway : 158 patients
- **New AHP pathway : 40 patients**
- All 40 patients seen through the AHP-led pathway were fully satisfied with their care and were happy to recommend this service to family and friends.

Traditional Orthopaedic Pathway



New DGRI Pathway



Conclusion

Patient satisfaction and safety: The excellent patient satisfaction with our pathway suggests that patients are happy with alternatives to the traditional consultant-led service delivery model provided high standards of care can be maintained.

Service efficiency: The traditional pathway required 4 additional orthopaedic clinic appointments per patient compared to our new pathway. With 40 patients seen through the new AHP pathway, 160 orthopaedic clinic appointments were avoided. These freed appointments were utilised to see patients with other orthopaedic conditions thereby improving efficiency and reducing waiting times.

Cost savings: ISD Scotland National Statistics (2019) for Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary indicated a cost per attendance for an AHP clinic at £73 and a Consultant clinic at £193. Hence, our pathway has resulted in a cost avoidance of £25,040 in the treatment of these 40 patients. The overall cost benefits will be much higher as we have excluded patients who were successfully treated through the AHP pathway without the need for surgery.

A model for post-covid service re-design: Our pathway is safe, efficient and cost-effective. The successful implementation of this innovative pathway could serve as a model for the post-covid19 restructuring of services within our health board and the wider NHS.