



NORTH AND SOUTH ESSEX LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEES

Service Specification for Locally Enhanced Services Domiciliary Falls/Minor Injuries Service

Introduction

This local enhanced service specification for domiciliary assessment of falls and treatment of minor injuries outlines a service which traditionally has been provided by general practitioners and the primary health care team as part of their terms of service. However, with changes in funding for providing treatment of minor injuries, such a domiciliary service can only be provided if it is separately negotiated and funded.

Background

With increasing numbers of older people in the community there is an increased number of requests to assess injuries following a fall and/or minor injuries, e.g. lacerations. Such patients require home visits for several reasons, e.g. physical infirmity, severe learning difficulties with or without physical disability, frailty and chronic medical problems. Transporting such patients either to a 'walk in' centre or A & E may be unnecessary or impractical.

Aim

To continue to provide a comprehensive in-hours domiciliary service to falls/minor injuries where patients for reasons of age, illness or disability are unable to attend the surgery or designated minor injuries unit.

Service Outline

Following a fall or minor injury, patients or their carers/relatives should telephone the surgery to request a home visit. Depending on the severity or the urgency of the episode, the designated doctor will speak and give initial advice.

If it is clear their transfer to A & E is necessary this will be arranged by the surgery. If transfer to A & E is not required or the situation is not clear the doctor or other suitable health care professional will visit the patient. The timing of such a visit will be as soon as possible taking clinical need into consideration. The patient will be assessed from the point of view of their injuries and the cause of their injuries. A risk assessment will be carried out as part of ongoing preventative care, taking level of supervision and medication review into consideration.

The doctor/health care professional will provide assessment and treatment of minor lacerations including wound closure/suturing if required, provided this can be done safely and the patient is cooperative and not requiring assistance from more than one additional person. Appropriate dressings will be applied and follow up arrangements made.

Tetanus status will be checked and booster given if required.

Adequate records must be kept. An audit of the number of visits and outcomes will be carried out. An annual review of the service will be carried out.

Accreditation

Those doctors who have previously provided services similar to this locally enhanced service, and who satisfy at appraisal and revalidation that they have such continuing medical experience, training and competence as is necessary to enable them to contract the enhanced service, shall be deemed professionally qualified to do so.

In the case of another health care professional e.g. nurse practitioner or nurse, such professionals will have special expertise in wound closure/management and participate in continued professional education and revalidation.