

What is teledermatology?

Dermatology Patient information



To help your appointment run as smoothly as possible, scan this QR code with your smartphone to complete the pre-appointment questionnaire.

University Hospitals Dorset (UHD) and Dorset County Hospital now have a rapid access teledermatology service. Digital photos of your skin will be taken at a photo clinic. This will be done by a healthcare assistant (HCA). The photo clinics are at hospital and community sites across the county. The photos will be reviewed to see if you need to come into hospital for further treatment. You will not see a doctor at the photo clinic. The service is run in partnership with Skin Analytics, who will support the assessment of your skin lesion. They do this by using an artificial intelligence computer program called DERM. DERM is a medical device. It recognises skin cancer and harmless skin conditions using dermoscopic images. A dermatoscope magnifies the skin lesion (makes it bigger). This means it can be looked at without skin surface light reflections.

Your GP will have referred you to have one or two lesions photographed. Only lesions that are on your referral can be photographed during your appointment.

What will happen?

After your GP has referred you, you will get a phone call from the hospital. They will tell you about your appointment at the photo clinic. You will get a text/email link for an online survey to fill in before your visit.

At your appointment, one of our healthcare assistants will discuss the process. They will also explain the levels of consent. This is to make sure you are happy with the photos being taken and the use of your images. You will then be asked questions about your medical history and details of the lesion.

The photographs will then be taken. You may be asked to remove jewellery or make up. Depending on the location of your lesion, you may also be asked to remove clothing. This is to see the lesion better. You may ask for someone else to be in the room.

Some lesions will not be suitable for assessment by DERM. This includes lesions that are covered in hair or are under nails. The HCA will identify any lesion which cannot be looked at DERM. If this is the case, images of the lesion will still be taken. The only difference is that the images will be looked at by a UHD dermatologist, rather than DERM.

The whole process will take about 25 minutes. The time of your appointment is the time you need to arrive in the department. If you have not filled out the survey before you arrive, your appointment will take longer. There can also be delays that can't be predicted.

Next steps: what will happen after my appointment?

The images will be encrypted and electronically transferred securely. DERM will then look at them. The software will advise if the lesion needs to be looked at by a UHD dermatologist. If so, the dermatology team will assess the report and review your photos. They will contact you if you need to come into hospital for further treatment. This normally takes 21 working days.

If DERM reports there is no sign of anything serious, a dermatologist employed by Skin Analytics will have a second look. If they agree, you and your GP will get a letter. This is normally within 21 days.

The report and your images will be securely saved and uploaded to your UHD electronic patient record.

What could happen after my photographs have been reviewed?

If the outcome states there is no indication of anything serious, you and your GP will receive a letter. We may include advice on treatment your GP can offer. You will be discharged from dermatology.

In cases where the outcome cannot be determined, you may be asked to:

- have a biopsy (skin sample) or the removal of the skin lesion
- attend for a face-to-face appointment with a dermatologist in hospital.

If a diagnosis can be made and further treatment is needed you may:

- be booked directly for surgery to remove the skin lesion. We will advise whether this is on an urgent or routine pathway.
- be booked into a consenting clinic. This is to discuss surgery in more detail with a dermatology surgeon.

You should get a letter in 21 working days or a phone call asking you to attend a face-to-face consultation. Going forwards, letters from the hospital should be available via the NHS app.

Contact numbers:

If your appointment needs to be cancelled or changed, please call **0300 019 4741**.

If you have not heard from the dermatology team, or are concerned about changes in your lesion, please contact us on **0300 019 3048** or email **teledermatologyclinics@uhd.nhs.uk**.

Your data

Secure storage: The photos and reports will be securely stored in accordance with data protection regulations.

Data usage: The photos and report will be available for University Hospitals Dorset to use. This is to support any further care you may need. Reports will be sent to your GP practice for your medical records. The report may be reviewed for quality assurance purposes by Skin Analytics or other authorised bodies. This data may include information collected during the assessment and any further diagnosis.

Research purposes: With your consent, we may use anonymized data for research purposes. This is to improve our service.

For more details on how your data is handled, please refer to the Skin Analytics' privacy policy. This can be found here: skin-analytics.com/toc/privacy.

Feedback

We hope that your visit to your local teledermatology clinic is positive. We welcome any comments or suggestions that may improve our service.

Please do so by emailing **patientexperienceteam@uhd.nhs.uk**

Or telephone: **0300 019 8499**

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