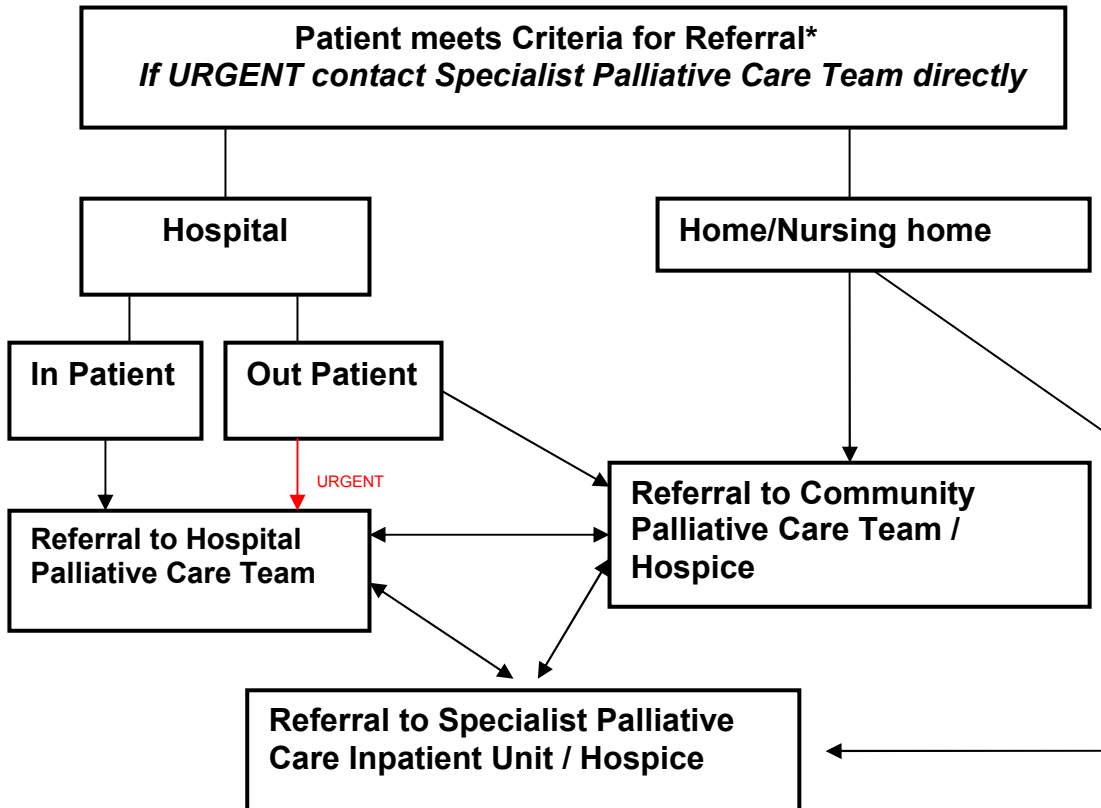


Referral Guidelines and Pathway for Specialist Palliative Care SWSH Palliative and Supportive Care Network



*Criteria for Referral

Most patients will have an advanced, progressive disease, where the focus of care will have changed from curative to palliative and the prognosis is limited. Some patients, who have specialist complex needs, can be referred at an earlier stage, from diagnosis onwards. Patients may be discharged if their condition stabilises.

- A demonstrable need for specialist palliative care must be established. Appropriate reasons for referral may include potential/existing difficulties with the following:
 - Pain and symptom management
 - Meeting the psychological, social and spiritual needs of the patient, their family, and / or significant others.
 - Terminal care/dying
- Where possible, the patient, and if not, the carer, should be informed and in agreement with the referral
- Any Health Care Professional can refer to the Specialist Palliative Care team, but acceptance must be with the agreement of the GP / Inpatient Consultant

Criteria for Urgent Referral: needing advice/assessment within 1-2 working days.

- Difficult physical / psychological symptoms causing distress and *not responding* to current management
- Rapidly deteriorating condition

N.B. For urgent referrals, direct contact with palliative care team is needed to discuss each situation individually