

## **Teledermoscopy by Communitas**

In its delivery of an NHS commissioned Teledermoscopy service in Surrey Downs, Communitas Clinics is leading the way in reducing waiting times and improving healthcare alongside patient satisfaction, by using a combination of technology and expertise to link in with GP surgeries and allow for fast diagnosis and referral to appropriate services where necessary.

The team developed a real time referral service to provide timely diagnosis and improve patients' access to services. Using specialist technology GPs in surgeries in Surrey Downs are able to send clinical information and images to the dermatology specialists within the service and receive diagnoses and management plans. GPs capture a high-resolution image of the lesion using high-quality digital technology. These images and supporting information are then sent to the dermatology specialist via a secure interactive platform for review. The technology systems in place ensure GPs have rapid access to specialist opinion, and this, therefore, reduces the amount of unnecessary secondary care referrals. Over 65% of patients referred to the service have avoided a referral to secondary care.

The knock-on effect of this is that hospital waiting lists are shorter; patients can be seen sooner and there will be less stress placed on already overstretched services.

The service was originally commissioned to roll out to 9 practices within 12 months, within 5 months 17 practices were signed up and there are now 21 practices in the Surrey Downs area who use the Communitas teledermoscopy service.

89% of GPs have stated it has enhanced their dermatology knowledge.

Communitas Clinics were announced the winners of an HSJ Award in 2017 for "Improving Care with Technology" for the teledermoscopy service.

A detailed case study can be viewed [here](#)