

## Free Choice

Choose and Book Release 4 is scheduled for release in April 2008 and will help facilitate 'Free Choice', providing referrers with both a 'Primary Care' menu, and a 'Show All' menu. Selecting the 'Search All' button will list all secondary care services from across the country, displayed in distance order from the patient's postcode.

### What is Free Choice?

"Patients referred for elective care will be able to choose to attend any secondary care provider across the country i.e. Patients are able to choose hospitals; hospitals are not able to choose patients."

Choice at Referral – Supporting Information for 2008/09, Department of Health, March 2008

## Finding Services Effectively

Experience has shown that searching for services using a keyword to describe the problem, symptom or condition is often more intuitive for referrers, and generally produces a shorter and more specific shortlist than searching by Specialty and Clinic Type.

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has published nationally defined keywords on its Directory of Services. This means you can now search for our services using keywords. The attached document lists the specialties and associated keywords.



## New Services available at Newcastle Hospitals

We are pleased to announce that Paediatric Cardiology and Paediatric Plastic Surgery are now directly bookable. These services can be found under the specialty of 'Children's & Adolescent Services'.

The only services that are not yet available to be directly booked are Orthopaedics, Clinical Immunology & Allergy, Sleep Studies and Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. Work is underway to facilitate the availability of these services. We will keep you updated in future Newsletters.

## National DoS Updates

The national team have made recent changes to Specialties and Clinic Types within Choose and Book. One of the most notable amendments has been the amalgamation of Colorectal Surgery, Gastroenterology, Hepatology, Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery, and Upper GI Surgery, into one new specialty named 'Hepato-Gastroenterology'.

A second significant update is the re-mapping of Audiology Services. The Audiology services that were previously located within the specialty of ENT have now been moved. Adult Audiology services can be found under the specialty of Diagnostic Physiological Measurement, and Paediatric Audiology can be found under the specialty of Children's & Adolescent Services.

The removal of 'General' clinic types continues. Where appropriate new clinic types, labelled "Not Otherwise Specified" have been added. This has been done to encourage referrers to first explore specialist services, then to select the "General" service where no specialist services are available.

We want to help you and your practice make the most of Choose and Book and the services offered by The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. If you have any problems or queries please feel free to contact Garry Schulz or Joan Debnam at: [cab@nuth.nhs.uk](mailto:cab@nuth.nhs.uk)