

- Reduced steps in patient pathway, meaning reduced time from GP referral to treatment or intervention for many patients
- Increased capacity in acute setting for more complex cases
- Patients seen in most appropriate setting by most appropriate practitioner



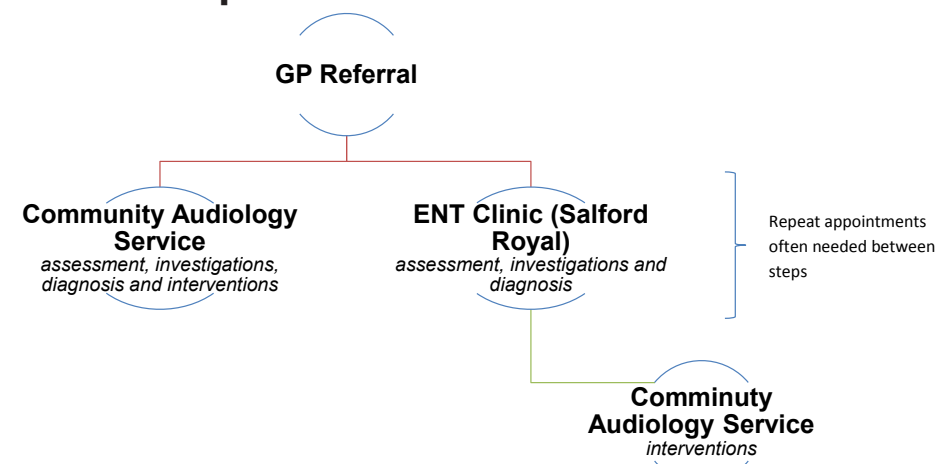
Advanced Practitioner-led Community Audiology Service

Community Audiology, Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust

The problem - a long and disjointed care pathway

Audiology services in Salford had operated via a disjointed care pathway which, for many patients, involved both community audiology service and ENT clinic (consultant) appointments:

Process map - before:



In 2011, the community service aimed to:

- Reduce referral-to-treatment times
- Provide patients with access to the most appropriate practitioner in the most appropriate (local) setting
- Reduce duplication
- Increase the capacity in the acute setting
- Improve the management of anxiety and depression

Providing services in the community

Advanced Practitioners in Audiology were developed in the community team to manage patients referred for hearing loss and tinnitus that do not meet the 'red flag' criteria for referral to the ENT clinic. All referrals are now first seen in the community audiology clinic, which now:

- Triages patients more appropriately into acute and community settings
- Reduces non-value-added steps in the care pathway - assessment, diagnosis and treatment for many patients now occur entirely in the community setting, often on the first appointment
- Improves access to a range of diagnostic tests in the community setting

The benefits - more than just reduced waiting times

- Reduced referral-to-treatment times for many patients
- Reduced patient anxiety about their condition
- Increased capacity in the secondary ENT service, with the potential for increased income generation

- Improved integration with wider health and social care services
- Improved outcomes for patients directly referred with tinnitus (audit results available)
- Improved levels of patient satisfaction (from survey results) from 95% to 99%
- Improved development of Audiology staff

Process map - after:

