Wound Care Service (WCS) Referral Criteria

Sirona Wound Care Service accept referrals for patients registered with a GP practice within BNSSG, who are over the age of 18, with provision for transitional care for 16–17-year-olds. In addition, there may also be cases where it is clinically appropriate for the WCS to provide treatment to those under the age of 16. This provision will be appraised on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the referring clinician and relevant paediatric services; the WCS will only deliver care where it is safe and clinically appropriate for an adult service clinician to do so.

Sirona Wound Care Service provide remote advice and face to face assessments for a range of needs detailed below. The service provides remote advice and guidance in the first instance due to high demand. Referrals will be triaged by a tissue viability nurse (TVN) who will decide whether a face-to-face assessment is required.

1. Lower limb assessments, including ankle/ toe brachial pressure assessments, and compression bandaging and garment assessment

Patients must have a wound to their lower limb(s) to be accepted by the Wound Care Service. Any patients with diabetes with a wound on the foot must be referred to podiatry, they will not be accepted by the WCS unless there is another wound not on the foot (e.g. a leg ulcer) that needs assessment. Non-diabetic foot wounds can also be referred to podiatry, but the WCS will accept referrals if appropriate.

Patients being referred to the WCS for oedema management, who don't have any lower limb wounds will **not** be accepted. If there is significant/ chronic oedema, and the referring service is unable to complete the assessment themselves, patients can be referred to the Sirona Lymphoedema Service for assessment and provision of compression garments, providing the patient has consented to wearing compression garments. For patients who have mild oedema, therefore do not meet the Lymphoedema Service referral criteria, arrangements should be made with the patients GP surgery to have an assessment (e.g. doppler/ measuring for compression garments), or if this is not an option, the patient will need to be referred to vascular (outpatients) for this assessment. Industry partners can assist with guidance on measuring for compression garments. Guidance on compression garment choice can be found [Lower Limb and Compression Therapy Pathway (February 2025) - Sirona](https://remedy.bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/media/4unfa5gv/sirona-lower-limb-and-compression-therapy-pathway-feb-2025.pdf) and [Chronic Oedema Pathway](https://remedy.bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/media/kqejjvzu/bnssg-chronic-oedema-pathway.pdf).

The WCS will only accept referrals for toe pressure assessments if an ankle brachial pressure index has been attempted but unsuccessful due to incompressible arteries/ tolerance. If a MESI (automated device) Doppler has displayed PAD (peripheral arterial disease), a manual Doppler should be completed prior to referring to the WCS for a toe pressure assessment (see leg ulcer guidelines for further information).

If a patient's wounds have healed whilst waiting for a doppler assessment on the WCS waiting list, the WCS will review whether it's still appropriate to visit the patient for further assessment to minimise the risk of recurrence. If the patient does not have any venous signs/ symptoms, a doppler assessment for compression garments may not be appropriate, therefore the patient will be discharged.

2. Pressure injury assessments, including equipment assessments and pressure injury prevention assessment

The WCS will accept referrals for pressure injury prevention or equipment assessment (no current wounds) when a patient isn't under an INT e.g., Practice nurse, GP, or self-referral. This is due to PNs and GPs not having access to equipment.

The WCS will offer remote pressure injury management advice to nursing homes. Nursing homes order their own equipment and may need to refer to occupational/ physiotherapy if they have any equipment concerns.

Patients with specialist equipment e.g. Wheelchairs, should be referred to Wheelchair Services via Bristol Centre for Enablement for review if there are any concerns with equipment - <https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/bristol-centre-enablement/referral-centre>

The WCS will accept referrals for community nursing patients who have non-healing pressure related wounds, providing a Personalised Pressure Injury Prevention Plan (PPIPP) has been completed. Assessment could be remote or face to face depending on clinical need.

3. Assessments of complex, static or slow to heal wounds, including assessments for advanced therapies such as larvae therapy and negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT), including VAC and PICO/ SNAP.

The WCS will accept referrals for patients with complex tissue viability needs, or where the referring clinician/ team do not have the knowledge or skills to address the needs of the patient. Where there are education/ training gaps, these will need addressing and the team will be supported to develop their knowledge and skills to allow them to deliver this care to patients. Industry partners may be utilised to facilitate this.

Sirona Wound Care Service have developed a variety of resources to support clinicians with wound and leg ulcer management. The WCS aim to support colleagues to develop their confidence and competence in managing their patient caseload referring to these resources and remote TVN advice, where possible. Face to face TVN assessments are reserved for complex wounds not responding to remote advice and guidance. It is important to acknowledge that patient concordance will also significantly impact wound healing.

Training

Practice nurse training is bookable through MA Training/ the ICB (BNSSG training hub).

Sirona staff training is bookable through LMS.

Nursing homes are responsible for arranging their own training.

Resources to review prior to referring to the WCS

These can be located on the Sirona Workplace Page: <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/knowledge/7052030244808796>

Or via the BNSSG Remedy website: <https://remedy.bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/adults/dermatology/tissue-viabilitywound-care-service/>

* Sirona wound management guidelines - <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/file_viewer/27165133603071830/?surface=KNOWLEDGE_BASE>
* Sirona leg ulcer guidelines - <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/file_viewer/7989241804420964/?surface=KNOWLEDGE_BASE>
* Sirona pressure injury policy - (Sirona staff only) <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/file_viewer/25473007792284428/?surface=KNOWLEDGE_BASE>
* Minuteful for Wound – Healthy IO guidance – (Sirona staff only) <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/knowledge/8620548567956948>
* Sirona wound management formulary and dressing guide <https://sirona.workplace.com/work/knowledge/7052030244808796>