



Guidelines for cardiac assessment in new patients > 16 years of age

Document History

Title	Guidelines for cardiac assessment in new patients > 16 years of age
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Practice variations exist across the region with respect to paediatric and adult cardiology age cut-offs. Lack of clarity for patients aged 16 to 18yrs has the potential to cause unnecessary delays in receiving care for new patients presenting acutely, as well as for those requiring outpatient assessment or investigations (e.g. echocardiography).

The table below identifies which teams are primarily responsible for patients within this age group, and are supported by BCCA (1) and BSE guidance (2). This guide does not relate to patients with known congenital heart disease (CHD) who are already under follow up with a Paediatric Cardiologist or a Paediatrician with Expertise in Cardiology (PEC) – such patients are followed up between Freeman Hospital, local PEC clinics and local Cardiology departments, depending on the underlying lesion, it's severity and the patient's readiness for transition to adult services.

Group	Clinic / Team
New (Non-CHD) patient referral > 16yrs *	Local Cardiology
New patient referral > 16yrs (Known CHD)*	Local ACHD / Newcastle ACHD

* Consider seeing patients with additional needs in Paediatric (PEC) clinic until 18yrs

References

1. Daubeney, P. (2019) 'Referral Guidelines for accessing congenital cardiac services: fetal, paediatric and adult'. London: BCCA.
2. BSE Council. (2021). Position Statement: Echocardiography in 16-17year olds. [online] Bsecho.org. Available at: <https://www.bsecho.org/Public/Public/News/Articles/2021/2021-12/202112-PSB003.aspx> [Accessed 12 Sep. 2025].