



Private Ultrasound Provider Pathway

(Referral for NHS review when an abnormality is identified during a privately performed antenatal scan)

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1 Introduction

- As part of their NHS care, all women are offered two scans to screen for fetal abnormalities during pregnancy. This is in keeping with guidance from the National Screening Committee. Across the UK a variety of non NHS businesses offer antenatal scanning services. Some women will choose to have additional antenatal scans, which are not clinically indicated according to NHS guidance, through one of these private providers. These scans do not form part of, and are not a substitution to a woman's essential antenatal care.
- The purpose of this pathway is to guide professionals to a suitable route of referral if an abnormality is identified during an antenatal ultrasound performed in a non NHS setting.

2 Guideline scope

This guideline applies to pregnant women booked for their antenatal care at maternity units in the North East of England and Cumbria who have an abnormality noted during an antenatal scan with a private provider.

3 Providing information to pregnant women

During their antenatal booking appointment, women should be provided with suitable information regarding non-essential antenatal scans. This can be provided in the form of a patient information leaflet.

4 Referral pathway

If an abnormality is noted during an antenatal scan in a non NHS setting, the woman should be appropriately referred to an NHS setting for further assessment and guidance. The responsibility for referral lies with the professional performing the scan and not with the woman herself. Referral should be made to the Maternity Unit providing the woman's routine NHS antenatal care.

4.1 Pre dating scan.

If a concern is noted prior to the 11-14 week gestation routine dating scan (most commonly absence of the fetal heart beat or concern about a possible ectopic pregnancy), a telephone call should be made to the on call gynaecologist through the hospital switch board.



4.2 Following dating scan.

A possible abnormality noted after the point of a woman's dating scan (or clearly after 11 weeks gestation) should be referred directly to the Maternity Assessment Unit of the woman's own hospital. All referrals from private providers will be accepted and should be made on the same day as performing the scan.

4.3 Responsibility of the private provider.

- The sonographer's findings and reason for referring to an NHS setting should be clearly communicated to the woman.
- A telephone call should be made to the appropriate team at the woman's Maternity Unit to refer the woman for further assessment and guidance on the same day as the privately performed scan.
- A comprehensive typed report of the scan findings should be given to the woman.
- The typed scan report should also be emailed to the referring team (clarified at the point of telephone referral).

4.4 Referrals made to NHS setting.

- All referrals from private providers should be accepted. If the guideline has not been suitably followed and a woman self refers to her local hospital following an abnormal private provider scan this should also be accepted. Following referral, the woman should be invited to attend her local hospital on the same day. The woman should be triaged and an appropriate history taken. Review should be undertaken by a doctor of ST3 level or above. Appropriate assessment, including CTG if appropriate, should be performed.
- If a possible fetal abnormality has been identified the case should be discussed with the on call obstetric consultant and an urgent repeat scan should be performed by a trained professional such as a local specialist in the woman's own maternity unit.
- If a fetal anomaly is still suspected, the standard regional pathway for referral should be followed including a formal electronic referral made to tnu-tr.fetalmedicine-nuth@nhs.net or telephone call to RVI Fetal Medicine if urgent advice is required.
- A Fetal Medicine appointment will subsequently be arranged as soon as possible. Any woman with a new major fetal structural anomaly, potentially life threatening fetal condition should be offered an appointment within 3 working days. Structural problems not considered "major or life threatening" will be offered an appointment within a week

5 Training, Implementation, Resource Implications



Guidelines are circulated to all staff and educational sessions are provided for community midwives, maternity assessment unit staff and obstetric medical staff to ensure that relevant personnel are familiar with the guideline.

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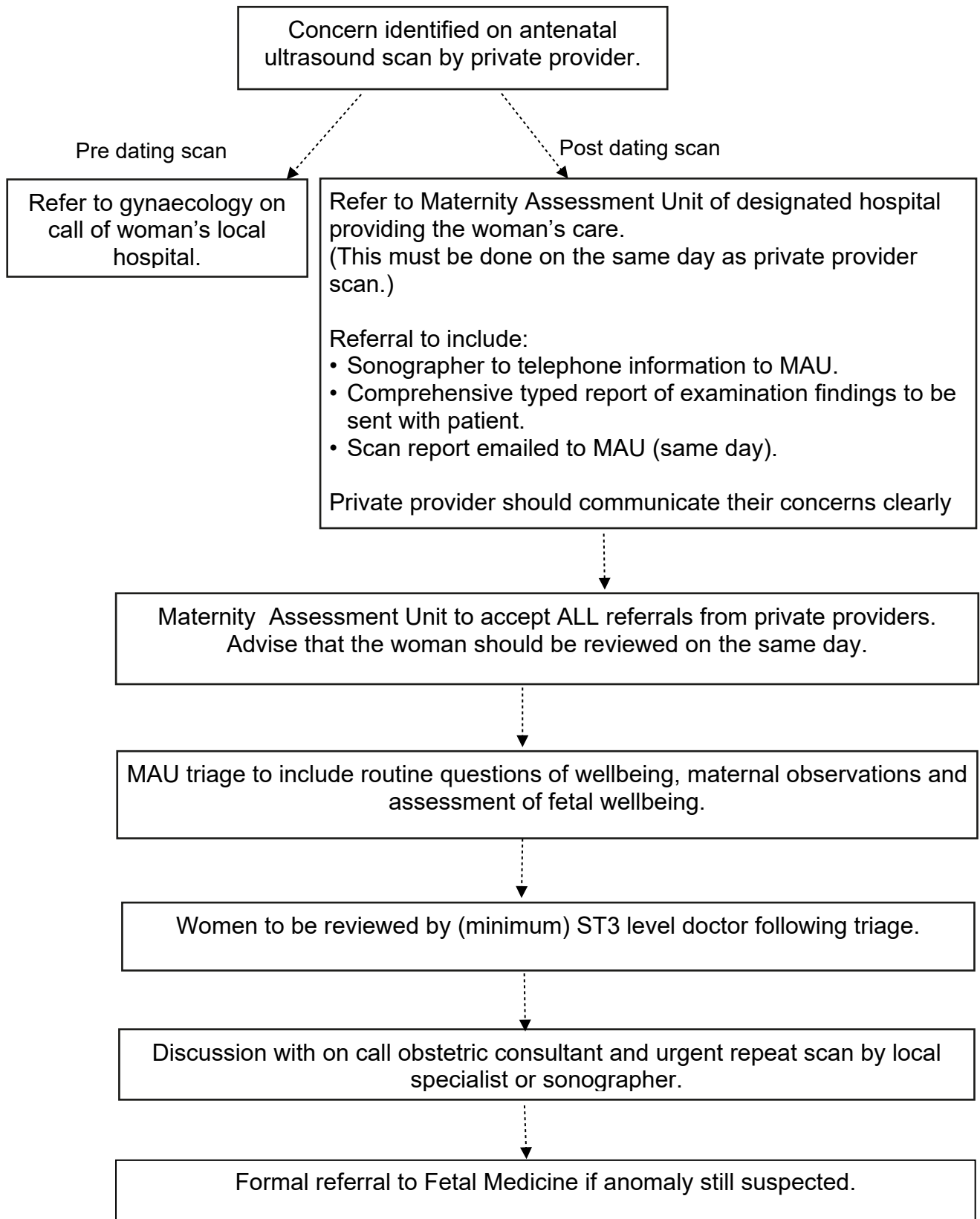


Maternity
Clinical Network
North East and North Cumbria



North East and North Cumbria
Clinical Networks

(Referral for NHS review following a privately performed antenatal scan)



Patient information regarding accessing antenatal scans via private providers.



During your pregnancy you will be offered all of your necessary antenatal care in an NHS setting. Your antenatal scans will be offered in accordance with standards set by the NHS Fetal Anomaly Screening Programme and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

Some women will choose to access additional non-essential antenatal scans via a private provider in a non NHS setting. This should NOT be done as a substitute for NHS care. If you have any concerns about your pregnancy you should contact your community midwife or the Maternity Assessment Unit.

In the rare event that a problem is identified during a private scan you will be referred immediately to your local Pregnancy Assessment Unit for further assessment in an NHS setting.

