

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 15 September 2021

STATUS: ACTION

CATEGORY: POLICY

Title: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway

The Clinical Programme for Orthopaedics has developed a national Carpal Tunnel Syndrome pathway.

Date of Expiry / Review: 12 months

For Action by:

All Health Boards
NHS Trusts

Action required by: November 2021

Sender: Caroline Mills
Clinical Programme for Orthopaedics Project Manager

HSSG Welsh Government Contact(s):

Olivia Shorrocks
Head of Major Conditions
Delivery and Performance
Olivia.Shorrocks@gov.wales
03000625545

Enclosure(s): Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway flow chart

Introduction

The Clinical Programme for Orthopaedics, was established to deliver transformation changes to patient pathways based upon best practice.

The national Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) task and finish group made up of surgical representative, Allied Health Professionals, Neurophysiologists, and Rheumatologists from health boards was set up to develop a national Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway. This will provide a single approach to a consistent service across Wales as well as support sustainable service delivery.

CTS is a condition where the median nerve is compressed where it passes through a short tunnel at the wrist, which also contains the tendons that bend the fingers and thumb as well as the nerve. Symptoms of CTS includes:

- tingling feeling or pins and needles,
- numbness,
- and sometimes pain in the hand¹.

CTS can sometimes be felt in the forearm or further up the arm, and gradually appears over a period of weeks.

What is the Carpal Tunnel Pathway

The Pathway is a high level service map designed to provide a scaffold for local service provision development. It provides guidance on:

- Conservative treatment in primary care
- Referral thresholds for routine and urgent referrals
- Use of diagnostic tools for decision making
- Promotion of one-stop surgical model
- Surgery by/ supervised those with relevant standard of training.
- Use of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMS) and direct discharge of patients to reduce unnecessary follow-up appointments.

How will the Carpal Tunnel Pathway be maintained

The Welsh Orthopaedic Board will review guidance in light of new evidence and advise on the need for changes.

What is your health board required to do?

Health boards will be expected to provide a development plan by 15 November 2021 which outlines the transition to the new CTS Pathway within the 6 months.

How will compliance be monitored?

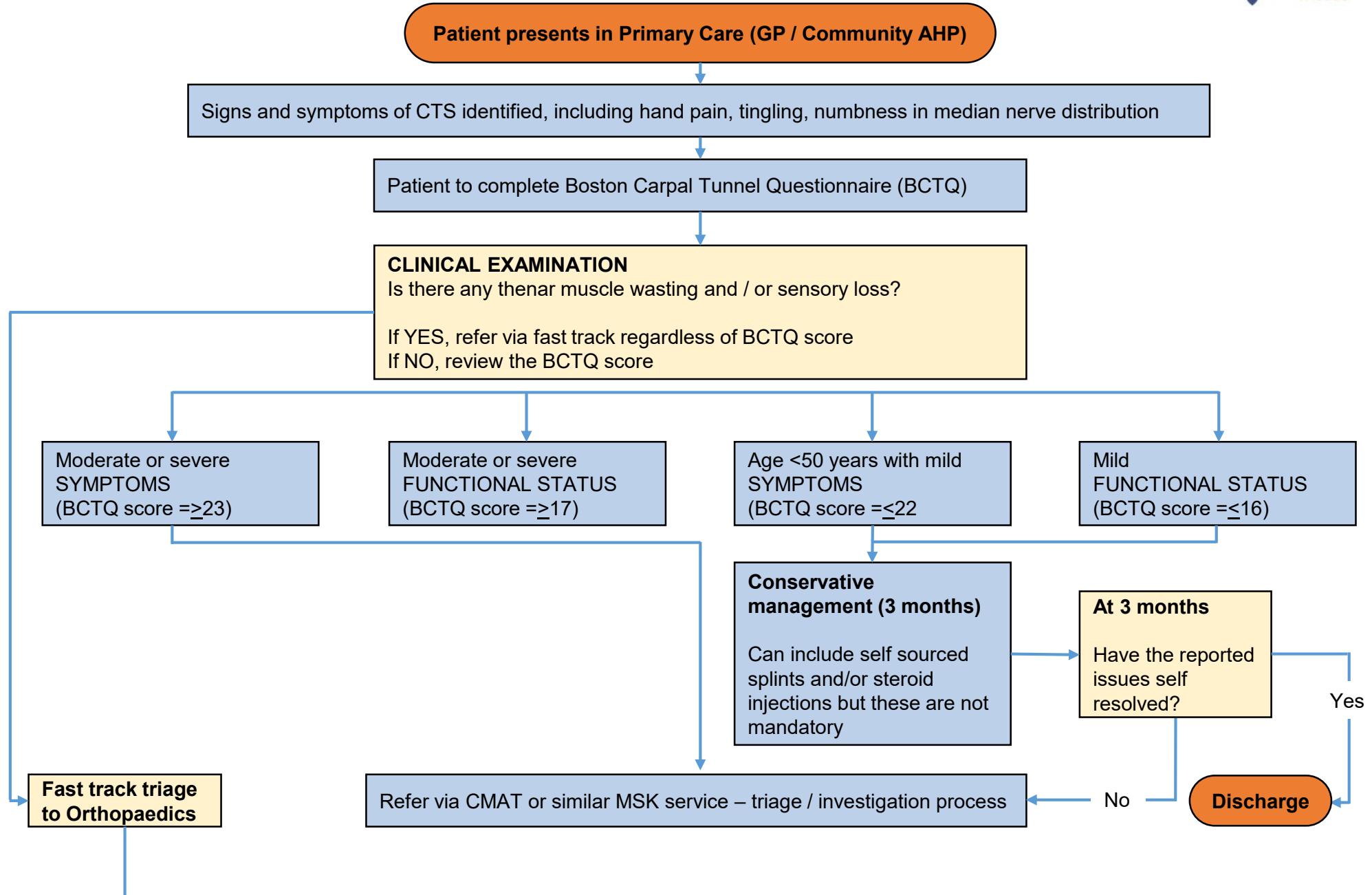
The Welsh Orthopaedic Board will monitor compliance with development plans through review meetings with clinical teams on a regular basis. Outcomes will be reported to the National Planned Care Programme Board.

¹ <https://www.bssh.ac.uk/> - patient information leaflet

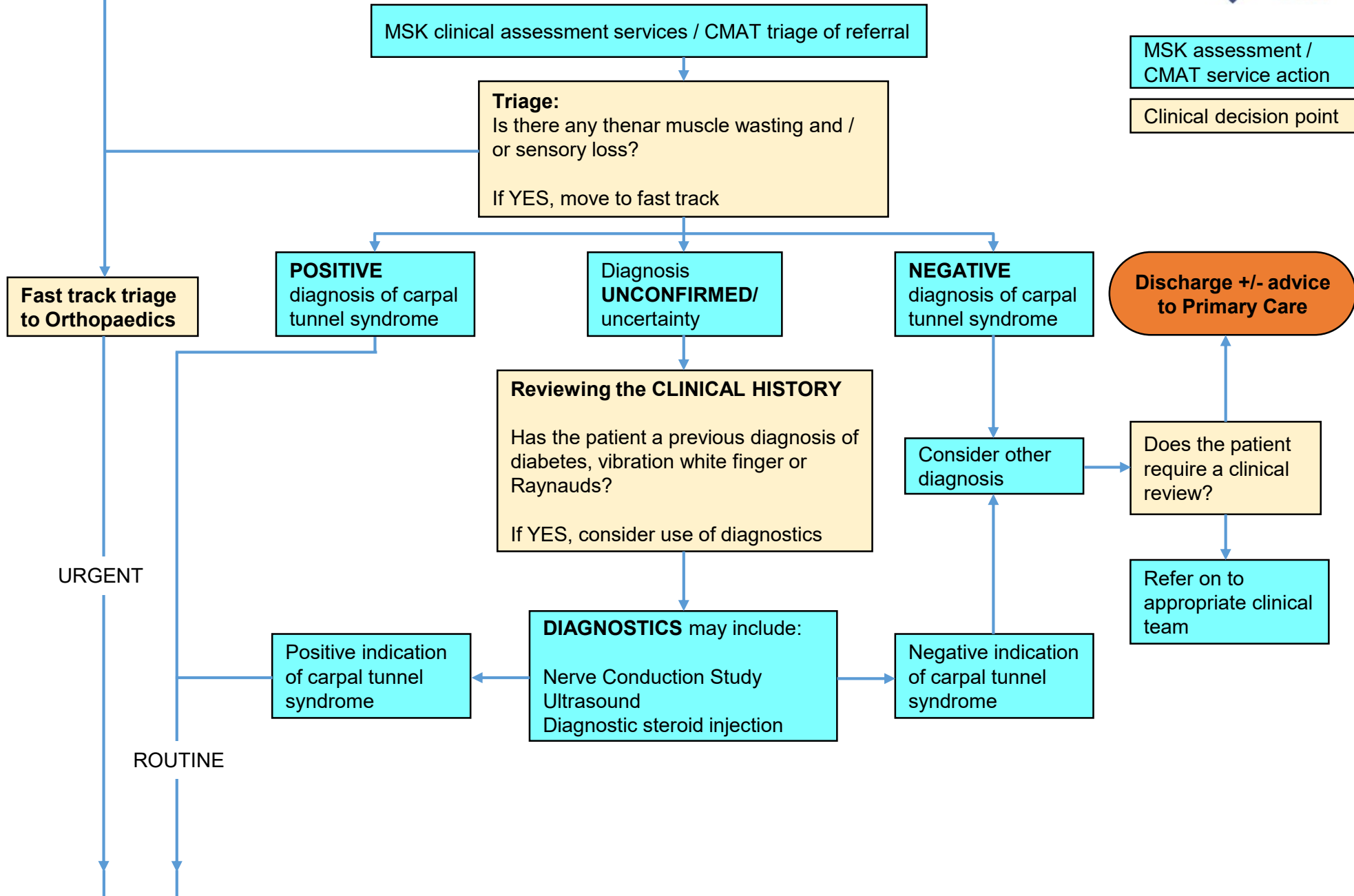
All Wales – Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway (1): Primary Care



Primary Care action
Clinical decision point



All Wales – Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway (2): MSK assessment service



All Wales – Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Pathway (3): Secondary Care

