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Midlands Trauma Networks	
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#### Version control/amendments

Date changed		Section/Para

#### Purpose

To outline the referral pathways for patients with open fractures presenting to non-MTC's in the Central England Trauma Network (CETN) to ensure safe and prompt patient care.

#### Scope of document

This guideline is for the use of ED and T&O teams working at hospitals within the CETN. This document does not advise on the prehospital management or ambulance triage of patients with open fractures.

#### Introduction

Patients with open limb fractures may self-present or be conveyed by the ambulance service to any ED. UHCW is the MTC supporting Northampton, Kettering, Warwick and George Elliot Hospitals. Some patients may require referral to the Ortho-plastic team at UHCW for specialist

surgical care. Referrals for specialist care (or for advice/discussion if uncertain) should be made early and not wait until after admission to the hospital ward.

## **Recommendations**

Patients attending a non-MTC with suspected open lower limb fractures should be assessed in ED.

Patients presenting with open fractures should have initial assessment and treatment in the receiving hospital including diagnosis/exclusion of other injuries, analgesia, removal of gross contaminants, dressing, antibiotics and tetanus prophylaxis, reduction and splintage.

Patients with multiple injuries requiring MTC level care (involving more than one specialty) should be referred to the UHCW Trauma Team Leader (ED Consultant) via UHCW switchboard.

Patients with isolated open fractures of the lower limb (excluding forefoot or digits) can be referred to the UHCW on-call Orthopaedic Registrar (by ED or Orthopaedics depending on local policy).

The on-call Orthopaedic registrar at UHCW will then inform the UHCW TTL that they have accepted the patient and are expecting transfer to UHCW.

Patients with open fractures of the upper limb should all be seen by the Orthopaedic team of the local hospital who will then consider if referral to a MTC is necessary and will communicate directly with the Orthopaedic Registrar on-call at UHCW.

## **References**

BOA/BAPRAS guidelines – open fractures 2017

[open fractures.pdf \(boa.ac.uk\)](https://www.boa.ac.uk/open-fractures.pdf)