

# A Renal Email Advice Service: Audit of a 5 year service

Steve Dickinson, Paul Johnston, Jon Stratton, Rob Parry

Renal Consultants, Renal Department, Royal Cornwall Hospital

email account [renal@cornwall.nhs.uk](mailto:renal@cornwall.nhs.uk)

# Launch

- In 2010 the Renal Department at RCHT created an innovative email account
- GPs and other health care professionals could pose questions to renal consultants

# Objectives

- Our aim was to create a streamlined email advisory service providing
  - a single point of access to renal consultant advice
  - an efficient timely response throughout the year
  - a reduction in paper correspondance
  - a reduction in unnecessary outpatient clinic attendances.

# User Satisfaction?

- In 2011 reviewed activity and user satisfaction of the email advice service.
- In 2015 a further review was carried out...

# Service delivery

- Each of the renal consultants has proxy access to the account
- Daily cover is arranged via a rota
- We aim to respond to all emails within 3 working days

# 2015 Survey Methods

- All users who had used the account between 1 April 2015 and 4 August 2015 were contacted and invited to respond to a Survey Monkey Questionnaire.
- 91 users of the service were emailed a link to the survey between June and August.
- 9 questions, assessing users motives for using the service and their experiences.

# Results

- In the 6 months between 1 Jan 2015 and 1 July 2015 there were 168 new email enquiries i.e. 6 to 7 enquiries per week
- This is an increase from 2011 when there was an average of 3 to 4 each week (171 emails in 12 months in 2011).

# Who responded?

Of the 91 users contacted, 42 completed the questionnaire;

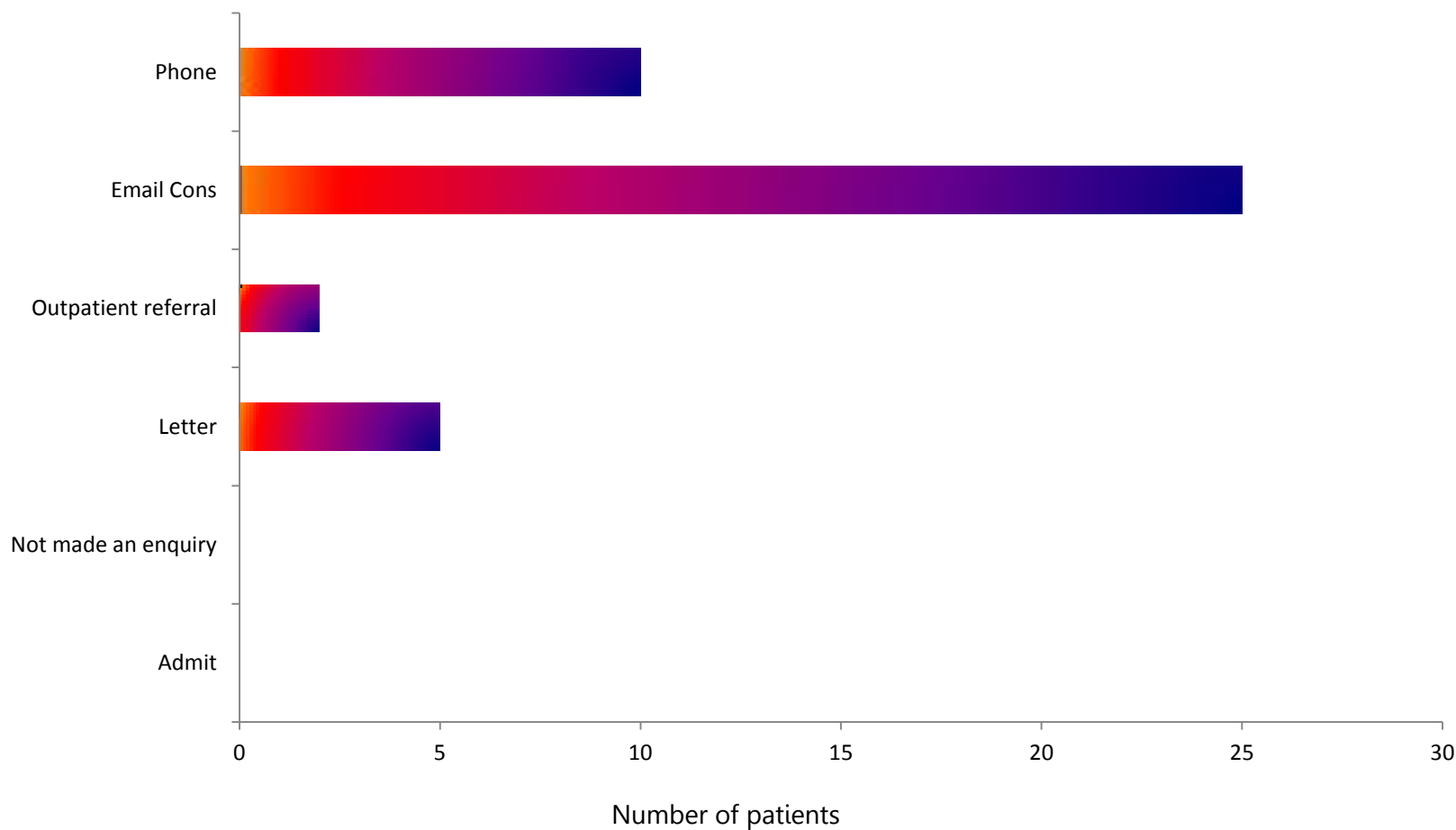
- 34 GP partners
- 5 doctors in training in general practice
- 1 GP locum
- 1 practice nurse
- 1 salaried GP



# Why did you choose to email the renal advice service?

- All 42 responders indicated that they has used the email advice service for advice on how to manage an individual patient's condition
- 5 users also explained that they had also used the service to seek advice on a general renal topic

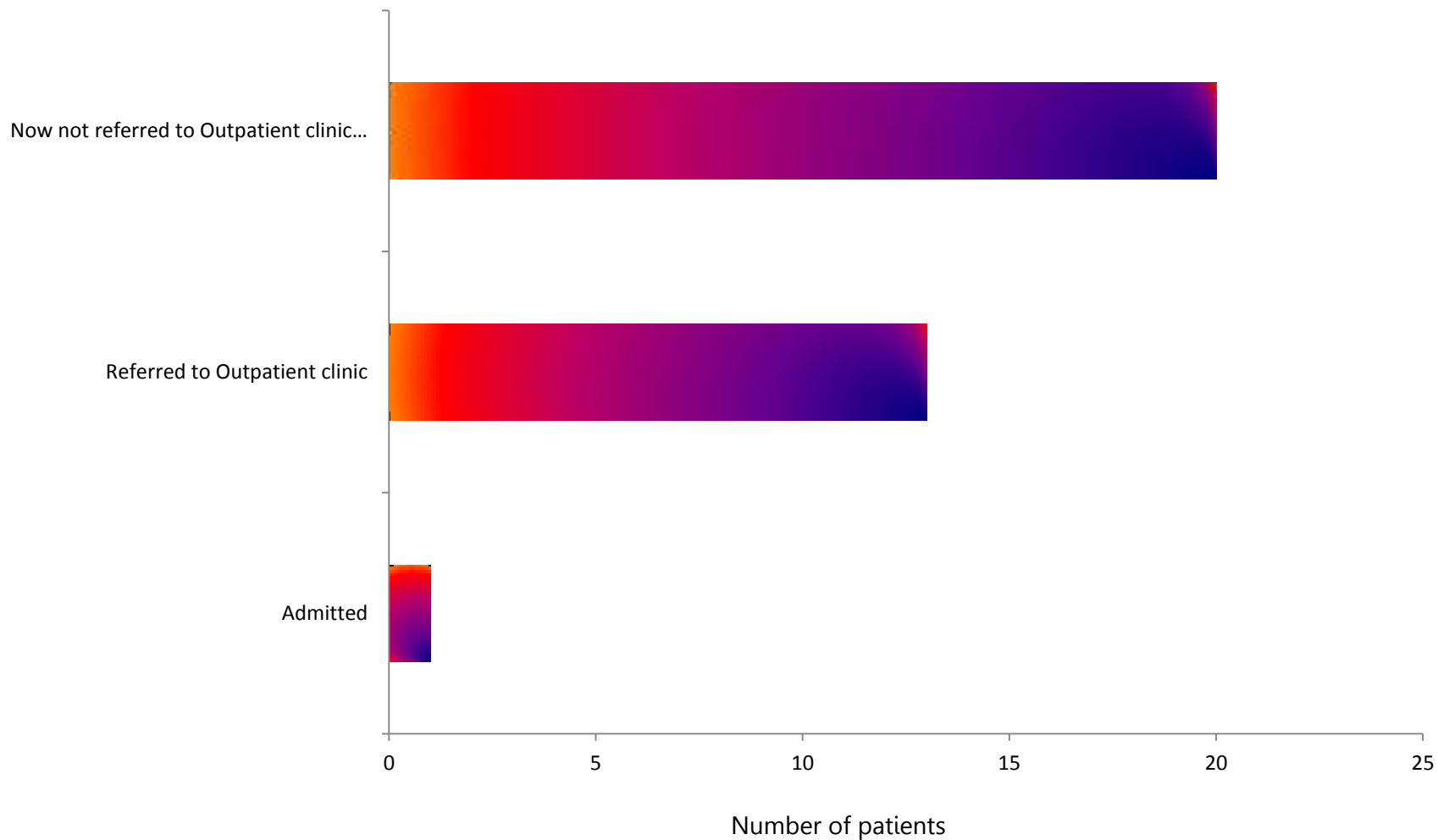
# If this service did not exist, how would you have obtained this opinion?



# Replies, Quality and Use Again?

- 100% of responders indicated that the advice was received as promptly as needed.
- 100% of responders indicated that the quality of the advice was 'Excellent'.
- 100% of responders indicated that they would use the service again.

# Following the email advice, was the patient...



# Management and Improved Care?

- 95% of responders indicated that the advice had led to a change in management.
- 100% of responders indicated that the email advice service improved patient care.

# Audit Criticism

- 46% of users who were sent the questionnaire completed it.
- Could responders who were more satisfied with the service have responded?

# Conclusions: feedback

- The number of emails to the service has doubled since 2011, with 168 new email queries in 6 months in 2015.
- Users of the service reported very high satisfaction with the timing of advice, as well as the quality of the advice
- There continues to strong interest and appreciation of this service

# Conclusions: savings

- Survey responders reported that 59% of patients were subsequently not referred to the outpatient clinic, hence leading to cost savings to the NHS
- Renal New Outpatient clinic appt: £182
- Financial saving to the health economy of £8,000 per 100,000 of population



# Questions & Comments