

Frequently Asked Questions Digital Care Home – SBAR Referral Form

1. What is the SBAR referral form?

The SBAR referral form is a structured way for care-home staff to provide information to the out-of-hours clinical team.

SBAR stands for:

- **S – Situation:** What is happening now?
- **B – Background:** What relevant medical history or circumstances are important?
- **A – Assessment:** What have you observed or found?
- **R – Recommendation/Request:** What are you asking the clinician to do?

The form is intended to make sure clinicians receive the key information they need to assess the resident safely and efficiently.

2. Why are we introducing the form?

The form aims to provide a consistent and structured referral process, reducing the need for care-home staff to telephone with lengthy or incomplete information.

It should help the out-of-hours clinician to understand the resident's situation before responding and reduce unnecessary delays caused by having to gather basic information during a telephone call. The more information given at the point of referral will mean some cases will be able to bypass the call straight for a home visit, based on information received. The homes will be able to fill in the form and await response from the clinician, rather than joining a telephone queue.

Anyone not using the form will need to contact 111, no referrals (except those individually stated below) will be accepted by Cumbria Health via telephone.

Carers can refer via telephone for;

- Patients on End of Life care (EOL)
- Deterioration of patients, where a form has already been submitted
- Confirmed system outages

3. When should we use the SBAR form?

Use the form when you need clinical advice, assessment or intervention from Cumbria Health (CH) where you would have previously contacted on the 0300 number.

Anyone not using the form will need to contact 111, no referrals (except those previously stated) will be accepted by CH via telephone.

The form will take approximately 3-4 minutes to complete.

4. When should we NOT use the form?

The form must not delay emergency treatment.

If the resident appears to be experiencing a life-threatening emergency, care-home staff should follow their existing emergency procedures and call 999.

Carers can also bypass the form and contact CH on the direct 0300 line for any patients who are on EOL care.

For example, this may include severe breathing difficulty, suspected cardiac arrest, significant uncontrolled bleeding or other immediately life-threatening situations.

5. How quickly will someone respond?

The response time will depend on the clinical urgency. The case will either be added as an urgent or routine timeframe dependant on the information provided in the form.

If you do not see the below icon after submitting the referral with the time & date of submission, please call CH on the direct 0300 line.

6. What if we submit the form and then become more concerned?

Do not wait for a response if the resident's condition becomes significantly worse.

Contact CH on the direct line and advise staff you have already submitting a referral and the patient is getting worse, the Control Room can then update the case awaiting clinical review.

7. What information do we need to include?

Staff should provide as much relevant information as possible, including some mandatory and non-mandatory questions.

If you can provide observations, these are most helpful for the clinician.

Please ensure all patient identifiable information (name, NHS number & Date of Birth) are correct at the point of inputting at the start of the form.

The problem of the patient must be clearly stated.

8. Do we need to complete every section?

Staff should complete all questions.

If something is not applicable, please leave box blank – please note, you must fill in all mandatory boxes (those that have 'Required' underneath)

9. Will staff receive training?

Yes, staff will receive a training video on how to submit a referral on the app, as well as videos on how to use the observation equipment.

All training videos will be available on the resource centre, linked below, at all times.

<https://cumbriahealth.co.uk/digital-care-home-resource-centre>

10. Can any member of care-home staff complete the form?

Yes, all staff can follow the training videos.

11. What happens after we submit the form?

You will see a 'Shared Successfully' box on the home page after submission, here will show the date & time of when the form has been sent to CH.

The referral will be received by the out-of-hours service and clinically reviewed according to the agreed process.

12. Will we still need to make telephone calls?

The intention is that the SBAR form becomes the preferred referral route for appropriate referrals.

However, telephone contact may still be used if the patient is on End-of-Life care.

If there is a confirmed system issue, carers can call CH, our Control Room will be informed of these outages, should they happen.

13. What if the electronic referral system isn't working?

If there is confirmation of the system being unavailable, carers can contact CH by telephone until the system is back up and running.

Our Digital Team will advise on any outages, please note this will only be during in hours service (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).

14. What if the clinician needs more information?

The clinician may contact the care home for clarification or further information.

Care-home staff should therefore ensure that **someone is available to respond to contact after submitting a referral**, according to the agreed local process.

15. Who do we contact if we have problems with the new process?

Please contact ch.digitalcarehome@cumbriahealth.nhs.uk if you have any questions or problems on the new process.

The resource centre also has lots of helpful information available.