Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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Suspected Scaphoid Fracture

If a patient attends your Trust's ED, UTC or MIU with a suspected scaphoid fracture, but normal initial X-rays, I would like to know how these patients are managed. Specifically:

What is your Trust/typical follow up pathway, including expected timescales, for these patients? (e.g. referral to fracture clinic and review at 2 weeks, or discharge with advice and to return if any concerns)

Patients presenting with a suspected scaphoid fracture whose initial X-rays are normal are managed as having a clinical scaphoid injury. They are subsequently reviewed in the Minor Injuries Clinic after 10 days, where repeat X-rays are performed to assess for any signs of a fracture that may not have been visible on the first X-ray, including evidence that the bone is beginning to heal.

What imaging follow up is conducted on these patients and at what time interval typically (e.g. repeat X-ray then MRI, CT, etc.)

If the repeat X-ray does not show a fracture but there is still tenderness over the area, a CT scan will be requested to look for a fracture that may not be visible on X-ray. There is currently an approximate two-week wait for a CT scan.

Please supply a copy of your local clinical guidelines/pathways and patient advice leaflet you use

Attachment 1 - the local guidelines used by clinical staff and

Attachment 2 - advice leaflet provided to patients.