

James Cook University Hospital launches new Transnasal Endoscopy Service



The first dedicated Transnasal Endoscopy service has been launched at James Cook University Hospital (JCUH) in Middlesbrough with support from Olympus and the Academic Health Science Network for the North East and North Cumbria (AHSN NENC). This new procedure is improving patient experience and efficiency in the hospital, leading to great benefits for the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and its patients.

Why TNE?

Conventional Transoral Endoscopy is an intrusive procedure, often requiring the patient to be sedated. There is plenty of evidence associating various risks with using general anaesthesia and procedures where sedation is used also require specially trained staff to be present, for example, a 'head-end' nurse. This uses up valuable staffing resource.

Transnasal Endoscopy procedures can often eliminate the need for the sedation of patients, as opposed to Transoral Endoscopy. This minimises the risk associated with general anaesthesia and vastly reduces patient recovery time.

JCUH has a long waiting list for endoscopy procedures, and to increase capacity has converted under-utilised space at the hospital to implement its TNE service. As less room is required to carry out a TNE procedure, the hospital was able to utilise a room that is too small to carry out conventional endoscopy procedures. TNEs can be carried out in a shorter timescale than TOEs, therefore increasing the number of procedures that can be carried out daily. As well as the reduction in procedure time and footprint, a TNE also requires less support staff to perform. These combined benefits increase efficiency within the department, leading to reduced waiting times and improved pathway performance.

What is Endoscopy?

Conventional Transoral Endoscopy (TOE) was the standard diagnostic method used within the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to visualise the upper part of the gastrointestinal tract. Transnasal Endoscopy (TNE) is an upper endoscopy method which is performed by the nasal route using a thin endoscope less than 6mm in diameter. The use of TNE can provide significant benefits in many areas, including patient safety, finance and strategy.

The Outcome

JCUH has worked with both the AHSN NENC and Olympus to implement this new procedure and bring the benefits of this service to patients and staff. The service was introduced to JCUH as part of the 7-year contract Olympus has with the hospital, to free up capacity within the Endoscopy Department.

“Transnasal Endoscopy is fast becoming an obvious solution for hospital trusts already overburdened with an increasing volume of procedures. This alternative to traditional gastroscopy creates a real impact on patients’ lives, reducing waiting lists and allowing patients to be seen quicker. Not only does this result in faster diagnosis, but also creates a more tolerable experience. We are delighted that James Cook has worked with Olympus to secure the equipment necessary for this dedicated service.”

**Paul Barlow,
Senior Product Manager for
Gastroenterology at Olympus**

There have been multiple patient benefits seen through the use of this new TNE service at James Cook University Hospital. Through ongoing feedback, the majority of patients would now not go back to a TOE procedure having experienced TNE. JCUH had initially anticipated that there would be an increased capacity for patients due to shorter procedure lengths, however, this has not been the case. What it has done is improve the amount of time spent ‘scoping’ as there is less discomfort and patients are not trying to pull the scope out.

Other benefits have been treating high-risk patients, such as Motor Neurone Disease sufferers. In one case the team at JCUH were able to deploy a Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy (PEG) using TNE, removing the necessity for sedation which can often compromise patients’ breathing.

Cost and time-saving benefits are realised in the fact that using TNE has freed up capacity to increase JCUH’s therapeutic work.

Future Plans

Using TNE is a low-risk procedure and has very quick patient recovery times due to the lack of sedation. This means that the procedure would be ideal for deploying in community hospitals and primary care settings, alleviating some pressure on the service at JCUH.

The shorter timescale for each procedure means there will be the development of several Two Week Wait (2WW) Gastroenterology GI Cancer Clinics, providing an opportunity to offer a rapid access ‘One Stop’ TNE procedure on the day of an outpatient appointment, if clinically appropriate.

