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**AUDIT OF A SPECIALIST PALLIATIVE CARE TRIAGE
ADVICE LINE WITHIN SOUTH TEES**

Trish Sealy, Fiona Perry, Stacey Stockdale. *South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Guisborough, UK*

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Background South Tees Community Specialist Palliative Care Team (SPCT) provides Specialist Palliative Care support to a diverse population across the Middlesbrough and Redcar/Cleveland areas. Data collection in recent years has shown increasing pressures of telephone calls from generalist professionals

requesting clinical advice/discussion. In 2011 an advice line was created using an office-based Clinical Nurse Specialist during working hours to co-ordinate and deal with telephone work. Alongside implementation of the System1 computerised patient record system within the team and across the locality it was felt this would provide a more controlled and consistent environment for the provision of timely and reliable advice with immediate access to written confirmation and a more readily available governance trail.

Aims An audit was carried out with the intention of providing feedback to support the maintenance and development of the service. Questionnaires were sent to every user of the service who consented during a defined period with responses returned anonymously to the audit department within the trust.

Results 21 responses were included in the analysis of which 19 were fully completed with a range of 12 different professional roles across health and social care represented. 19/19 were satisfied with the response time and 17/17 whose enquiry regarded direct patient management felt that the advice received helped them to manage that patient more effectively. 8/19 felt that without advice the patient may have required admission to the acute hospital and 5/19 resulted in subsequent referral to the SPCT for further input. Qualitative comments were generally favourable.

Conclusions This audit provides evidence to support the continuing need for a robust telephone advice service across South Tees. It highlighted possible areas for future development which include extension of available hours and dedicated telephone number.