



NHS

VIRTUAL PODIATRY



Case Study: NHS Virtual MSK Podiatry Service

South West Podiatry delivered an NHS-commissioned virtual musculoskeletal podiatry service using prefabricated orthotic options, including Interpod devices from Algeos. A 2024 service evaluation explored waiting times, patient access and patient-reported pain outcomes.

The Challenge: COVID-19 and wider service pressures created long NHS waiting lists for musculoskeletal podiatry. Patients needed timely assessment, advice, rehabilitation and orthotic support, while face-to-face capacity remained limited.

The Service: In July 2021, South West Podiatry was commissioned to provide a virtual MSK podiatry service for NHS patients across NHS Greenwich and NHS North Hampshire. The pathway included an initial virtual consultation and up to two follow-up appointments.

The Product: Where clinically appropriate, podiatrists prescribed prefabricated orthoses including Interpod devices from Algeos. Orthoses were designed remotely and sent directly to the patient's home, alongside education and

Patient Benefits: Across the 19-month evaluation, 492 patients were analysed. Average waiting time from referral to first appointment was 35 days, and referral to discharge was 91 days. Most patients had around two appointments, and 56.5% remained virtual throughout their journey and were discharged to self-management.



Clinical Benefits: The service showed a statistically significant reduction in patient-reported pain in patients who received orthoses, with or without a rehabilitation plan. The study concluded that virtual MSK podiatry delivered favourable outcomes and complemented traditional face-to-face services during a period of limited access.

Source: Brunilda A, Thanaporn T, Walton T, McManus L. An evaluation of a virtual musculoskeletal podiatry service implemented to address prolonged National Health Service waiting times. J Foot Ankle Res. 2024.