**Access to appointments for diagnostic scans set to be fast-tracked thanks to new electronic referral system**

***Ireland’s leading provider of MRI and other diagnostic scans, Alliance Medical, and Clanwilliam Health, the largest provider of practice management systems in Ireland, launch electronic referrals system***

**DATE:** Securing appointments for MRI and other diagnostic scans is be fast-tracked following a partnership between Ireland’s leading specialists in the sector, Alliance Medical, and Clanwilliam Health, the nation’s largest practice management provider for private consultants and GPs.

The partnership will, for the first time, enable GPs and consultants to electronically refer their patients for MRI, CT and Ultrasound scans at Alliance Medical’s centres around the country.

It will use the HSE’s web-based messaging service, Healthlink, which provides for the secure transmission of clinical patient information, including referrals, between hospitals, health care agencies and GPs. Healthlink currently facilitates 10 million exchanges of information annually.

Available across the Socrates, HealthOne and HPM systems used by GPs, the new service will speed up access for people who are waiting for diagnostic scans by enabling GPs to send secure electronic referrals for their patients which are instantly acknowledged and fully traceable.

GPs can also send referrals to Alliance Medical via Healthlink through ’Complete GP’, which is another practice management provider.

Commenting, Eimear O’Donnell, HR Manager at Alliance Medical Ireland said: “This is a very significant development for the public, for GPs and ourselves. Because of the number of sites we have throughout Ireland, we provide the quickest access to diagnostic appointments for patients. However, there has historically been a delay in the referral process because of the manual effort required for GPs to send a referral via fax, telephone or post. Through this partnership with Clanwilliam Health, doctors can now refer their patients directly for scans electronically through Healthlink while the patient is sitting in front of them. That gives instant access to the system and will result in appointments being offered potentially on the same day they are sought, cutting out a lot of delays in the process. The results of the scans will also be transmitted back to the referring doctors electronically through this system, speeding up patient diagnosis.

“This not alone significantly reduces the time it takes to get a referral but ultimately a more timely diagnosis. It also leads to a reduction in cost and enhances efficiencies for GP practices and at a time when many, particularly in rural areas, are under pressure due to dwindling populations and GP availability.”

Emmet Gilhooley, Enterprise Account Manager at Clanwilliam Health, said: “We are delighted to be able to offer GPs easy access to refer patients to one of the country’s top diagnostic specialists. To avail of the service GPs simply need to follow the normal steps they would take when electronically referring a patient to a public hospital, except now they will have access to all Alliance Medical sites throughout the country. This gives them same-day access to diagnostic scans whereas the reality up until now has been that the referral process could take anywhere between a few days to a week. This is an exciting step forward for not only Clanwilliam Health and Alliance Medical, but also for the patient and the overall healthcare ecosystem”.

To find out more about Alliance Medical or Clanwilliam Health, please visit [www.alliancemedical.ie](http://www.alliancemedical.ie/)

More information about Clanwilliam Health is available [www.clanwilliamhealth.com](http://www.clanwilliamhealth.com) . or contact Emmet Gilhooly (Emmet.Gilhooley@clanwilliamgroup.com)

**Ends**

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