



**Press Release**

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**New Clinic Boost for Patients**

A new blood analysis clinic for patients who take Clozapine, used in the treatment of schizophrenia, opened recently at Hallam Street Hospital.

Part of the prescribing licence for Clozapine requires patients who take it to have their blood tested regularly to ensure that they can continue taking the medication. Patients previously had to make two visits to hospital and wait up to four days for their results, they are now able to get their results instantly.

Kay Berrow, Team Leader for Wednesbury and West Bromwich Community Health Team (CMHT) said 'The launch of this clinic is a real boost for patients. Previously they attended clinic, had their bloods taken and then the samples were sent to Wales for analysis which often led to delays. Now we take the blood, analyse it on site and the results are sent to the Zaponex Treatment Analysing Service (ZTAS) via the internet to Holland. Within two minutes we get the go ahead, if results are in the required range, to issue the patients medication'.

Kay continued, 'Patient feed back is really positive they appreciate only having to attend once to comply with their medication monitoring regime, especially with the cold weather we have had recently. Eventually I would like to see all patients who are taking Clozapine coming to the clinic, we take a holistic approach to their care and can offer help and advice on dealing with any side effects, and any concerns patients may have about taking Clozapine.

The service is open to patients on Clozapine from across Sandwell known to the Trust, both inpatients and out patients. We also offer a service to our patients with learning disabilities.

The clinic has come about through partnership working with staff from Sandwell General Hospital's Path Lab and Dudley Guest's Pharmacy Department, who have all worked together to ensure a smooth transition to the new clinic.

**ENDS**

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**NOTE FOR EDITORS:**

**Sandwell Mental Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust (SMHFT)** is the major provider of mental health and specialist health learning disabilities services to people of all ages in Sandwell.