



COLONOSCOPY FOLLOW-UP/SURVEILLANCE....advice for the GP.....

by Dr Alistair Cowen

Given the increasing mobility of the population and the increasing tendency for patients to change their GP frequently, colonoscopy follow-up is very difficult.

GIE will recommend a follow-up interval on our clinical report. We assume you advise the patient of this follow-up requirement when you see them after the procedure.

When the follow up is due, we (GIE) send the patient an advisory note indicating follow-up is due and to see their GP to arrange this. If there is no contact with us within one month we send a second letter. If no response, we do not pursue the matter further. At the same time as we send the patient's first letter, we send a letter to the GP who has referred the patient for their last procedure.

No doubt one would get differing legal advice on how far patients should be pursued. Our advice is that the system outlined above is adequate. If the patient is still under your care then it would probably be reasonable to remind them, if they do not contact you for referral within 3 months. If the patient is no longer under your care you would not appear to have a duty of care to pursue the patient further.