

Supplementary material 1: Variables collected

Group 1: collected by a physiotherapist and junior medical doctor	Administrative variables	<p>Has the referral used the national referral template?</p> <p>Is the letter dated?</p> <p>Are the first and surname of the patient present?</p> <p>Is the referring doctors' surname present?</p> <p>Is the contact telephone number of the doctor present?</p> <p>Is the name of the referring hospital present?</p>
	Clinical variables	<p>Is there any clinical information present?</p> <p>Quantify clinical information*</p> <p>Is there a suspected or differential diagnosis, a summary assessment or a clinical question being asked?</p> <p>Is there a reason stated for referral?</p> <p>Is the clinical information consistent (information flows, clinical information supports the conclusion or question)?</p> <p>Are chronic medications detailed?</p>
Group 2: collected by two medical doctors		<p>Could this patient be triaged on the basis of this letter?</p> <p>Are there fundamental pieces of clinical information missing?</p> <p>Is there enough information to manage this patient?</p> <p>Is this referral appropriate?</p>

*1: ≤10 words, 2: ≥11 ≤75 words, 3: ≥76 words