

YOUR SUSPECTED CANCER REFERRAL

Why have you been referred on the pathway?

If a disease is diagnosed early, treatment can be more effective with better outcomes. So if there is a possibility that your symptoms could indicate cancer, you will be referred urgently to see a specialist (on what is called a “Suspected Cancer Referral”).

Although your symptoms could show the possibility of cancer, it is important that you know that **only about three people in 100** referred in this way will have cancer.

You should see a specialist as soon as possible to confirm or exclude a cancer diagnosis. This letter tells you what you can do to help ensure that you are seen quickly.

What does it mean to be urgently referred?

General Practitioners (GPs) diagnose and treat many illnesses. However, sometimes they may need to send you to see a hospital doctor who specialises in your particular problem. This could be for a number of reasons, such as:

- Your GP feels your symptoms need further investigation
- Treatment your GP has already prescribed has not been effective
- The investigations you have had already have shown some unusual results

Your GP will either:

- Send your details urgently to the appropriate department at a local hospital, and that department will contact you directly, with an appointment; or
- They will make an appointment for you at a local hospital.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE GP HAS YOUR MOST UP TO DATE ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU DISCUSS ANY PLANNED HOLIDAY YOU HAVE WITH YOUR GP.

At this stage, you will not have a choice of which hospital you will see the specialist at, and as it may not be the nearest hospital to where you live, you may have to travel to this appointment. However, it is very important that you go to this appointment even if you need to travel further to do so.

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What do you need to do?

- The hospital will try hard to give you an appointment as soon as possible. This may mean short notice and a limited choice of appointments available. Please make every effort to fit in with the date they offer you
- It is very important that you go to your appointment – don't put it off
- If you can't attend your appointment, please contact the relevant clinic as soon as you can, to organise another urgent appointment.

You should have the clinic's number on the letter which they will have sent you.

Once your appointment is arranged

To make sure that you are treated as soon as possible by the right people, you may be contacted directly by another hospital (not necessarily the one where you had your first appointment), who will invite you to go for an appointment at short notice. It is important that you go to this appointment rather than delaying. You will be sent full details of where your appointment will be and how to get there.

For diseases like cancer, you may need specialist equipment and services to get a diagnosis and receive your treatment. This could mean you have to attend more than one hospital for tests. Some of your treatment may also be at more than one hospital. For some very rare cancers, you may be treated at hospitals outside Greater Manchester and Cheshire, as they will have the expertise in treating these cancers.

More Information

If you want more information about this, you can talk to your GP.

Alternatively:

- You can contact your local CCG Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) to discuss your treatment /appointment, Complaints and Freedom of Information enquiries Tel: 0161 212 6270, email: patientservices.gmcsu@nhs.net
- Or, call NHS 111, this is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Call 111 if:

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next

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