Early diagnosis of cancer: How do we make sure patients don't slip through the net?









Safety-netting: Definition

- Safety netting is a 'diagnostic strategy¹' or 'consultation technique²' and requires effective systems and processes to ensure timely re-appraisal of a patient's condition.
- NICE definition³: 'A process where people at low risk, but not no risk, of having cancer are actively monitored in primary care to see if the risk of cancer changes'

1. Almond S, Mant D, Thompson M. Diagnostic Safety Netting. *British Journal of General Practice 2009;* 872–874. 2. Bankhead C UK et al. Safety Netting to improve Early Cancer Diagnosis in Primary Care: Development of Consensus Guidelines. *Cancer Research.* UK Department of Primary Care Health Services 2011. University of Oxford. **3.**Suspected cancer: recognition and referral NICE guideline. Published: 22 June 2015

CANCER

What is the guidance around safety netting?

NICE Guidelines 2015: 'Consider a review for people with any symptom that is associated with an increased risk of cancer, but who do not meet the criteria for referral or other investigative action.

The review may be:

- *planned* within a time frame agreed with the person, or
- patient-initiated if new symptoms develop, the person continues to be concerned, or their symptoms recur, persist or worsen'



What is the guidance around safety netting?

- **Safety-netting summary**
- 3 elements:

Patient communication

GP consultation

Practice systems



Safety netting to improve early cancer diagnosis in primary care: development of consensus guidelines. *Final Report. 4th May 2011.* Clare Bankhead et al.

Patient communication





GP consultation





Practice systems





Thank you!

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