

Dear Colleague,

Re : Launch of the Neck Lump Pathway

The Head and Neck Clinical Delivery Group have been working with the Cancer Alliance to plan and lead the delivery of improved outcomes for patients locally, one of their deliverables is to ensure full implementation of the new cancer waiting times system ahead of the introduction of a new 28 day Early Diagnosis Standard in 2020.

We will be launching the New Neck lump pathway for patients who present with neck lumps who have no other symptoms and do not present as high suspicion of cancer on:

Monday 27th July 2020

Head and Neck MDT's struggle even within the current pathway due to often complex nature of Head and Neck Cancer, this is amplified due to capacity issues in Radiology, with a very limited number of Clinicians being able to carry out ultrasound guided fna's and biopsies.

It was established that the investigations that cause the most delay in the 2ww pathway are the ultrasound fna's/ biopsies.

With an appreciation that neck lumps are part of the 2ww criteria and should remain so if there is a high clinical suspicion, we wanted to provide an alternative pathway that would still maintain urgency but would protect the 2ww slots for the most appropriate referrals aiming towards a first seen target of 7 days.

The aim would be to reduce the number of neck lump (No other Symptoms) referrals to 2WW whilst offering the GP's the reassurance that the patient will have had appropriate investigations. This pathway would see patients either discharged back to GP after their ultrasound should no abnormality be found or would inform the most appropriate referral that should be made either to a specific consultant or speciality. Any suspicion of cancer that may occur as part of this pathway will be upgraded to an internal 2ww again to the appropriate speciality. This ensures that all potential outcomes are appropriately managed.

Any patient that is suspicious for cancer and has other symptoms along with a neck lump should be continued to be referred via the two week wait system, but please request and ultrasound as failure to do can significantly delay the pathway.

We have included some links to illustrate how this will now look and a link to the patient information that is available on ICE. The presentation regarding the new pathway can be found on the BEST website under events

Patient Information and Standard Operating procedure



Finalised patient information Neck Lum



Standard Operating Procedure for GP's Ne

Kind Regards Lisa Sanderson,

Cancer Services Project Manager