Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Non-specific symptoms faster diagnostics pathway

Patient information leaflet

If you need this information in a different language or accessible format, please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you

Якщо вам потрібна ця інформація іншою мовою або в доступному форматі, зверніться до співробітника, який зможе це для вас організувати

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة مختلفة أو بصيغة مُيسَّرة، فيرجى التحدث إلى أحد العاملين والذي سيقوم بترتيب ذلك لك.

如果您需要其他語言或無障礙格式的資訊，請聯繫工作人員，他們將為您安排。

இந்தத் தகவலானது உங்களுக்கு வேறொரு மொழியிலோ அல்லது எளிதில் அணுகக்கூடிய வடிவத்திலோ தேவைப்பட்டால், அதனை உங்களுக்காக ஏற்பாடு செய்துதரக்கூடிய பணியாளர் ஒருவரிடம் தயவுசெய்து பேசவும்.

Dacă aveți nevoie de aceste informații într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rugăm să vă adresați unui membru al personalului, care va face demersurile necesare pentru dumneavoastră.

اگر به این اطلاعات به زبانی دیگر یا در قالب دسترس‌پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Se necessitar desta informação numa língua diferente ou num formato acessível, por favor fale com um membro da equipa que poderá organizá-la para si

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی مختلف زبان یا قابل رسائی فارمیٹ میں چاہیے، تو مہربانی کرکے عملے کے کسی رکن سے بات کریں جو آپ کے لیے اس کا بندوبست کر سکتا ہو۔

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje mają być przekazane w innym języku lub dostępnym formacie, prosimy o kontakt z członkiem personelu, który może to dla Państwa przygotować

ئەگەر پێویستیت بەم زانیارییانە هەیە بە زمانێکی جیاواز یان شێوازێکی تر، تکایە لەگەڵ ئەندامێکی ستافەکە قسە بکە کە دەتوانێت بۆت ڕێکبخات

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What is a faster diagnosis pathway?

The Faster Diagnosis Pathways are designed to ensure patients are investigated and have cancer diagnosed or ruled out within 28 days of their referral.

For those diagnosed with cancer, this means they can start their treatment, and next steps can be agreed quickly.

Your symptoms may be caused by a number of common conditions. Although there may be a concern that your symptoms could suggest cancer, it is important to remember that 92% of patients referred with suspected cancer do not receive a cancer diagnosis. The pathway will exclude cancer quickly for these patients, giving reassurance sooner.

Catching cancer early is key to receiving the most effective treatment and increasing the survival rate. Beginning treatment earlier will reduce the spread of cancer.

Each cancer site performs to Faster Diagnostic Standards. You have been referred to the **Non-Specific Symptoms (NSS) Faster Diagnostic Pathway (FDP).**

Who will be looking after me?

The NSS team consists of a team of doctors and nurses who specialise in acute medicine and oncology (cancer).

The NSS team consists of a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) that work together to ensure that you have the most appropriate tests to get a diagnosis and management plan put in place as soon as possible.

Why have I been referred to a non-specific symptoms' pathway?

You may have been referred to a NSS pathway via one of these routes: GP appointment, A&E or an acute medical unit. **A clinician has referred you to the NSS pathway because you have symptoms that may need further investigation.**

These symptoms are not specific to common cancer and may include:

- Unintentional weight loss in the last three months
- Abnormal blood tests
- Unexplained abdominal pain of four weeks or more
- Unexplained or progressive pain, including bone pain of four weeks or more
- Sweats or night sweats
- Persistent and unexplained symptoms such as:
    - Nausea/bloating
    - Loss of appetite
    - Fatigue/extreme tiredness

Other reasons for referral may include:

- Radiological imaging that shows suspicion for cancer
- Participation within a clinical trial such as: Galleri®

Patient support

The NSS team will provide you with contact details for the pathway navigator. The navigator works with the specialist team and will be your main point of contact.

They will get in touch with you to ensure that you are kept up to date with what is happening such as appointment dates and any changes you need to be aware of.

What tests will I have?

To speed up your diagnosis, tests may have been arranged by your GP surgery or hospital to be completed prior to being seen by the NSS team. These may be an x-ray, CT scan, blood tests or a Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT).

Please follow the instructions and complete the tests as soon as possible, as this will speed up the time to provide you with a diagnosis.

Following your hospital appointment, you will be informed if you need any further tests. If you do these will be arranged for you by the nurse.
Further tests could include:

- Blood tests
- X-rays - a test to look at bones and the inside of your body
- CT scan (Computerised Tomography) - an x-ray that gives more detailed images of the inside of your body
- Endoscopy - a procedure to look inside your body with a thin flexible tube with a camera on one end

You will be provided with further information regarding each test should you need any.

Attendance at tests

To move forward in your pathway, it is important to attend all appointments and tests. Failure to attend or complete tests will delay your diagnosis and may result in discharge from the pathway.

Getting your results

When all your results are available, they will be discussed in the MDT meeting by the non-specific symptoms team. You will then be contacted to discuss your results and the next steps.

You may be seen in a clinic appointment at the hospital or have a telephone or video clinic appointment arranged.

Your GP surgery will be kept updated with all your test results.

What happens following your diagnosis?

The outcome of your investigations could indicate there is a cancer. In this instance we will arrange further investigations and an onward referral to the most appropriate team. You will be contacted by the hospital to arrange an appointment at the earliest convenience.

The investigations may rule out cancer but indicate follow-up is required by a different, more appropriate team.

The NSS nurse will arrange an onward referral so that this can be managed by specialists. The hospital will contact you to arrange an appointment.

This may not be done as urgent and will depend on the team's specific management plan and local policy.

In most cases, the investigations completed rule out cancer and any other serious illness. In this case, you will be referred to primary care with advice and guidance.

Enquiries and further information (Whiston and St Helens)

If you have any questions about this service, please do not hesitate to contact the pathway navigator.

The pathway navigator will be able to answer any queries regarding pathways and appointments. However, as they are non-clinical, they may not be able to answer all your questions but will signpost them to the specialist nurse who will return your call.

The pathway navigator's number is: 01744 646 7733

The navigator can answer any queries Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. Please use the space below to record anything you may find helpful.

Contact information

_____

_____

_____

Questions

_____

_____

_____

Enquiries and further information (Southport and Ormskirk)

Nurse Specialist: _____

Consultant: _____

If you have any questions about this service, please do not hesitate to contact the team:

Phone: 01704 705237

E-mail: Soh-tr.vaguesymptoms@merseywestlancs.nhs.uk

Address:
Southport Hospital,
Acute Oncology
Town Lane,
Kew,
Southport,
PR8 6PN

Working hours:

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
(Exclusive of bank holidays).

Patient experience survey

In order to improve the patient experience for those referred to the NSS pathway, we would be grateful for any feedback. The survey can be completed in a few ways:

- Paper format - this can be posted to your address with a prepaid return envelope
- Weblink - we can send this to you directly
- QR Code - this can be scanned using most smart phones.

Please scan the code below to access the survey this way.



Participation in this survey is voluntary; if you do not wish to take part you do not have to. Non-participation will not affect the care or treatment you receive. All completed surveys are anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to help us improve patient care.

Useful information and support

The following websites may be helpful to you:
https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer
https://www.macmillan.org.uk/
https://www.england.nhs.uk/cancer/faster-diagnosis/

Southport and Ormskirk

If you are struggling and require support, the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service at 29 Wright Street Southport, PR9 0TL provides a confidential, drop-in service for anyone affected by cancer.

Please call 01704 533024 or email bsfccg.macmillancic@nhs.net

Support groups

St Helens Cancer Support Group
https://sthelenscancersupportgroup.org.uk/

Lyndale Knowsley Cancer Support
https://www.lyndalecancersupport.co.uk/

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group
https://www.widnesandruncorncancersupport.org.uk/

Whiston and St Helens

If you are struggling and require support, the **Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service** at St Helens Hospital provides a confidential, drop-in service for anyone affected by cancer.

Please call 01744 646985/01744 647000 or email macmillansupport@sthk.nhs.uk

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If you are struggling and require support, the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service at 29 Wright Street Southport, PR9 0TL provides a confidential, drop-in service for anyone affected by cancer. Please call 01704 533024 or email bsfccg.macmillancic@nhs.net

Notes

There may be students and observers present during your consultation as part of their ongoing training. Please let the staff know if you do not wish any students to be present during your attendance

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a chaperone present during your procedure.

MWL has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse, violence or aggression shown to staff and patients, by patients, visitors or members of the public. We will not tolerate any form of bullying, victimisation, harassment, discrimination, unacceptable and inappropriate behaviour and/or unacceptable and inappropriate language.

All instances of abuse, violence or aggression, no matter how big or small, will be investigated and action taken if necessary.

Whiston Hospital
Warrington Road
Prescot
Merseyside
L35 5DR

St Helens Hospital
Marshall Cross Road
St Helens
Merseyside
WA9 3DA

Newton Hospital
Bradlegh Road
Newton-le-Willows
WA12 8RB

Southport Hospital
Town Lane Kew
Southport
Merseyside
PR8 6PN

Ormskirk Hospital
Dicconson Way
Wigan Road
Ormskirk
L39 2AZ