

Suspected Cancer: Recognition and Referral NICE guidance NG12

June 2015

The new NICE guidance is here! Published on 22 June 2015.

<http://nice.org.uk/guidance/ng12> (full guidance)

There are changes to some referral routes including more direct to test recommendations and lower threshold for referral based on symptom combinations with a positive predictive value (PPV) of 3 or more (previous guidance based on PPV of 5 or more) .

The guidance is presented on the NICE website in a clear and concise format and can be viewed as cancer sites or symptoms. The pathway (flow chart icon) is easy to use and will take you through the adult and childhood suspected cancer guidance:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/suspected-cancer-recognition-and-referral>

There is clear indication of which advice is new (2015) compared to the previous guidance (2005).

Safety netting is clearly recommended – for those being referred for investigation and for patients who have some symptoms but who do not require referral.

There are links at the end of the recommendations page to other relevant NICE guidance.

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng12/chapter/recommendations-on-patient-support-safety-netting-and-the-diagnostic-process>

Patients

There is clear advice to patients on the NICE website about the guidance and what they should expect from a referral and the timescales advised.

Commissioners

Please ask your commissioning team to communicate with your trust about access to urgent (within 2weeks for examination and reporting) for X ray chest, CT abdomen and MRI brain and ultrasound as indicated in the new NICE guidance.

There is a costing template and statement on the NICE website.

For GPs

THERE ARE SOME SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Some of the 2 week wait referral templates will need to change and there will be a delay before this is implemented. Until then you may want to annotate the template with additional information to support your referral if relevant to the new guidance.

Some of the referral pathways are unchanged or there is already recent up to date guidance ie. Suspected ovarian cancer.

Key messages/ watch out for

Brain	GP urgent - within 2 weeks direct to MRI (CT if MRI contraindicated) for progressive/ subacute loss of neurological function
Breast	Refer 2ww to breast service for unexplained lump in the axilla
Upper GI	Look at platelets – thrombocytosis combined with symptoms may indicate urgent referral or non-urgent UGIE
Pancreatic	Urgent - within 2weeks CT for suspected pancreatic cancer if over 60, weight loss and certain sx – including new back pain; new diagnosis of diabetes
Gallbladder	Urgent - within 2w USS for gallbladder mass
Liver	Urgent – within 2w USS for liver mass
Lower GI	FOB testing is back, for patients over 50 without rectal bleeding who have weight loss/ abdominal pain or under 60 with change in bowel habit or iron deficiency anaemia or over 60 with anaemia.
Gynae	Check full blood count and consider urgent (within 2 weeks) USS if over 55 and platelets are raised /abnormal discharge/ haematuria.
Haematology	GPs need to be able to access urgent (within 48 hours) full blood count/ serum protein electrophoresis + urine test for Bence Jones.
Head and Neck	Consider assessment by a dentist within 2 weeks for oral or lip lump /or red or red and white patch in the mouth
Lung	Do a full blood count to look for thrombocytosis

Sarcoma	Urgent - within 2weeks referral for an unexplained new or growing lump
Skin	Use the weighted 7 point check list for suspicious pigmented lesions
Urological	Check white cell count as part of investigation for non-visible haematuria

It is expected that there will be learning modules coming out to support GPs in the uptake and use of the new guidance. There will be some duplication but you may find the following resources useful:

CRUK website no resource for this yet but links to RCGP website other useful learning / improvement/ CPD activities are available here including safety netting info.

In the next month expect to see a summary and also examples of 2ww templates.

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/learning-and-development-tools>

MacMillan website no resources yet

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthandsocialcareprofessionals/Resources/Resources.aspx>

RCGP e-learning free to members - early cancer diagnosis module

<https://cas.rcgp.org.uk/cas/login?service=http%3A%2F%2Flearning.rcgp.org.uk%2Flogin%2Findex.php>

BMJ learning free to BMA members –

<http://learning.bmj.com/learning/home.html>

From the GP Update team - £225 including a course handbook:

<http://www.gp-update.co.uk/The-GP-Cancer-Update-Course>

From the NB Medical hot topics team - £195 including course handbook:

<http://www.nbmedical.com/gp-update-courses>