

## Patient information for urgent referrals

### This information sheet explains why your GP has referred you urgently to hospital and what you need to do

#### Why have I been referred urgently to hospital?

You've been referred urgently because your GP feels your symptoms need further investigation. There are many common conditions that these symptoms could be linked to, including cancer. However, most people who have an urgent referral don't have cancer. In the event that cancer is diagnosed, then ensuring that the diagnosis is made early means treatment is likely to be more effective. This is why it is important that you are seen urgently.

**This referral is urgent. You will be offered a telephone or face-to-face appointment with your hospital in the next 14 days. You may need to be available for further tests over the next four weeks to receive a diagnosis quickly. Please make sure that you are available during this time.**

#### What does your GP need to know?

- Make sure your GP has your correct address and telephone number including a mobile number if you have one as the hospital may contact you by telephone.
- If you are unable to attend appointments within the next four weeks, please tell your GP.
- If you need a translator, have access needs or would like a woman consultant, please let the hospital know in advance of your appointment.
- If you have not received an appointment from the hospital within two weeks, please contact your GP practice. Alternatively, if you know the hospital where you have been referred, you can contact their [Patient Advice and Liaison Services \(PALS\) department](#).

#### What will happen next?

Your GP practice will book you an appointment. If your GP has not been able to book this for you, the hospital will contact you to arrange this.

Your initial appointment with the hospital may be a telephone or video call with a nurse specialist. The nurse specialist will find out more about your symptoms. Alternatively, you may have a face-to-face appointment with a specialist.

**Please note:** *You must notify the clinician if you intend to record the call or include a friend or family member on the call.*

The hospital will send you instructions about your in-person appointments or the tests that you are likely to have on the day you attend the hospital. Please check these instructions carefully for up-to-date advice about preparing for your appointment.

Once you have agreed your date with the hospital, it is very important that you attend. Please call the number on your confirmation letter to let the hospital know immediately if you are unable to keep your appointment.

### **What will happen at the hospital?**

When you have your hospital appointment, you will usually see a specialist or have a diagnostic test. You will be told in advance if you need to have any tests during your appointment, so please ensure you follow any instructions given to you in advance. Be prepared that these appointments may take a few hours depending on waiting times and which tests you need.

You will be contacted about the outcome of the tests within 28 days of your referral, but you may be told the outcome of your tests on the day. You may want to bring a friend or family member with you for support or if you have concerns about understanding what the medical team will discuss with you. Please check your letter for guidance about visitors.

### **Any questions?**

If you have any concerns or questions about your referral to hospital, please call your GP surgery to speak to the person who referred you.

If your symptoms get worse before your appointment or continue after cancer has been ruled out, please contact your GP.

### **Useful links for further information**

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support>

**An approximate timeline for your investigations and results are given below but may be longer if your symptoms are complex or you require multiple tests.**

