

Our ref: MH/JJ  
Your ref:

Date: 26 January 2015

Wessex Medical Directors

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Dear Colleague,

**Re: 2 Week Wait (2WW) referrals with suspicion of cancer and Consultant Upgrades.**

I have recently had a few requests for clarity with respect to the referral of patients in whom there may be an underlying cancer diagnosis.

It seems that some patients seen in secondary care are being sent back to their GP for onward referral on a 2 Week Wait pathway.

This can prolong and complicate the patient pathway and may result in diagnostic and therapeutic delay, and thereby potentially the outcome for the patient.

It is clear that, where a patient is already under the care of the health service and suspicion of cancer is raised, this could be considered to come under the definition of a 'consultant upgrade'. We therefore suggest, in line with Cancer Waiting Times Guidance, that local agreement, policy and governance is in place to allow consultants (or authorised clinician) to make most effective use of this pathway.

I would be very grateful if you would remind all your clinical colleagues that these pathways exist and should be used to the maximum benefit of the patient, regardless of whether they are in primary care or otherwise.

This has been confirmed by the National Programme Manager for Cancer.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Hayes  
Clinical Director  
SCN (Cancer), NHS England (Wessex)