

## Improvements to the pathway for patients with a suspicion or diagnosis of cancer.

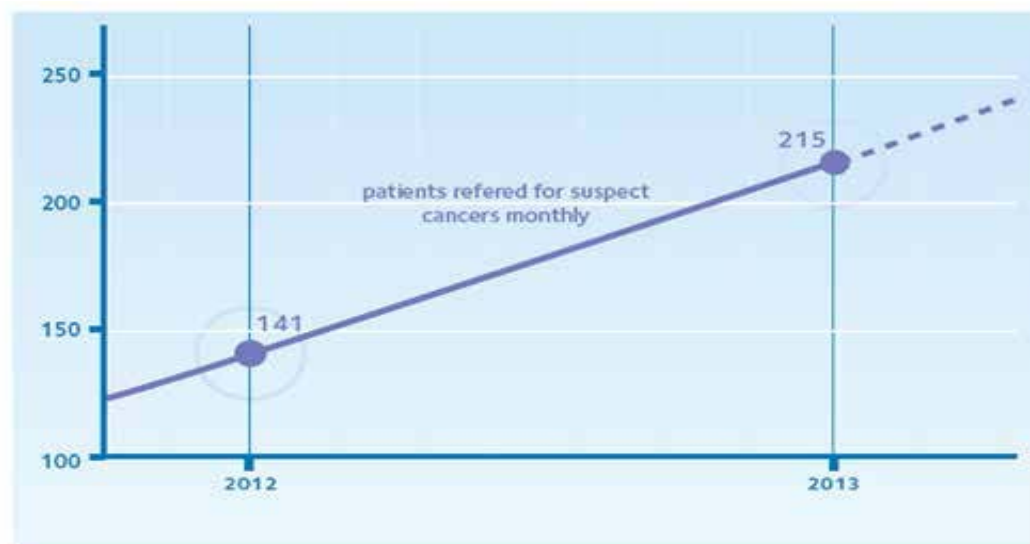
**Problem:** Patients diagnosed with, or suspected of, having cancer need rapid access to specialist investigations and multi professional decision making based on international best practice standards in order to have the best outcomes. Additionally, the clinical pathway to diagnosis and through treatment can be complex and the experience frightening, so patients also need to be supported and enabled to make informed and often difficult choices.

**Aim:** Ensure all patients are seen by specialist doctor within 48 hours, allocated a patient pathway coordinator, discussed by multi -disciplinary team (MDT) and supported by a clinical nurse specialist.

**Intervention:** The referral process was streamlined in agreement with the PHCC for patients who are suspected of having cancer. Clear criteria for urgent suspected cancer referral across all tumour groups were agreed. Patient Pathway Coordinators were introduced to help and support patients as they navigate their way through the system. A system was introduced to ensure all patients were presented for discussion by a multi-disciplinary team of healthcare professionals before a treatment plan was agreed. Clinical Nurse Specialists were appointed to give information, emotional support and expert advice.

### Results

#### Patient referred with Urgent Suspected Cancer to a Multi professional Team.



### Team

The Cancer Multi Disciplinary Teams. (MDT's)

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### Conclusions:

Having clear simple criteria and a streamlined referral process has lead to more patients being referred for formal MDT discussion. This ensures patients benefit from evidence based treatment options.

Patient pathway coordinators ensure patients have timely access to the correct investigations and clinical nurse specialists ensure they are informed and supported.

### Next Steps:

A patient experience survey is in progress and will be used to further improve the pathway. The MDT 's will undergo a formal Peer Review. Additional Clinical Nurse Specialists will be appointed for areas not yet covered.