

## NEL Cancer Alliance Primary Care Update September 2023

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### 1 New cancer performance standards

From 1 October 2023, the standards measuring waiting times for cancer diagnosis and treatment are being modernised and simplified.

The NHS will move from the 10 different standards in place now to three:

- Faster Diagnosis Standard: a diagnosis or ruling out of cancer within 28 days of referral (set at 75%)
- 31-day treatment standard: commence treatment within 31 days of a decision to treat for all cancer patients (set at 96%)
- 62-day treatment standard: commence treatment within 62 days of being referred or consultant upgrade (set at 85%)

**There is no change to the way GPs refer patients onto Urgent Suspected Cancer pathways** – the only change is that the NHS will measure how well it is dealing with those referrals by looking at speed of actual diagnosis, not whether the patient has a first appointment within a fortnight.

Read more here: <https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/news/modernising-cancer-waiting-time-standards>

## 2 GP compliance with LGI referrals having a FIT

The latest data for LGI referrals with a FIT shows that we are ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of all the cancer alliances in the country. Many thanks for all your work in increasing the number of referrals with a FIT.

Our top performing PCNs, all with a score over 80%, are:

- U87776 - WALTHAM FOREST LEYTON COLLABORATIVE PCN
- U56681 - DOCKLANDS PCN
- U06978 - NEWHAM NORTH EAST 2 PCN
- U00367 - HAVERING SOUTH PCN
- U23362 - SOUTH ONE NEWHAM PCN

A reminder on guidance for IIF data for FIT can be found in the [May edition of our primary care update](#).

## 3 Latest NHSE guidance on GP direct access

On 7 September 2023, NHSE published the [latest guidance for GPs on direct access](#).

It provides advice on the use of urgent direct access referrals to specific diagnostic tests where the threshold for referral under the urgent suspected cancer referral pathway – to a specialist or for urgent GP direct access testing – as outlined by National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline NG12 is not met. This guidance is distinct from NG12 but should be considered alongside it

## 4 PSA Update for Barts Health patients

As previously advised in our [February update](#), the PSA lab ranges were updated in keeping with the latest guidelines in December 2021. It was identified by Barts Health that a cohort of patients who had been tested in this timeframe had a PSA result reported as normal when it was outside of the new normal threshold. An exercise was undertaken with support from the cancer alliance to recall the affected patients and invite them in for a subsequent PSA test against the new lab ranges.

All patients have been contacted and the PSA ranges have been changed and are now accurately reflected on all trust sites, in line with NICE and Pan London USC Referrals.

- 159 pts identified (2 deceased) – 117 patients tested, 40 not responded/declined to be tested
- 54 require MRI to rule out cancer
- 45 MRIs performed, 7 still to be done, 1 unfit, 1 declined
- 63 discharged with no further action required
- 36 (of 42 not re-tested) no response after 2 letters and three calls to numbers on file (weekdays and evenings)

Letters have been sent to the patient's GP to reflect the outcome and option to be re-referred for PSA if those that have refused / not responded or changed their mind.

Those booked for MRI are in various parts of the pathway. Once complete a review will be undertaken to finalise numbers who have confirmed prostate cancer and then share.

Any patients who have confirmed cancer will be reviewed as part of clinical harm review and will be shared accordingly with the NELCA Urology ERG (Oct '23) and NEL ICB Quality team.

For any further queries please contact [bartshealth.urologypsa@nhs.net](mailto:bartshealth.urologypsa@nhs.net)

## 5 Infopool: a new resource for prostate cancer patients

[The infopool](#) is a new, interactive website created by the charity Prostate Cancer Research. It contains easy-to-understand information on tests, treatments, clinical trials, side effects and patient experience. Read more: <https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/news/launch-new-resource-prostate-cancer-patients>

## 6 Targeted Lung Health Check progress update

Uptake continues to be high as we expand into Tower Hamlets and we have already scanned over 1,000 local residents. So far, patient experience has been excellent, with [95% rating their lung health check as good or very good](#).

An updated information slide pack is available to [download](#).

A common query is regarding the management of identified coronary calcification. Guidance in the form of a flow chart and next steps is available to [download](#).

We have written to all GPs in Tower Hamlets separately with more information and links to resources. If you did not receive this, please email [p.thomas6@nhs.net](mailto:p.thomas6@nhs.net)

For more information about lung checks in north east London visit <https://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/tlhc>

## 7 Important update for GPs on dermatology (BHRUT)

BHRUT is receiving high volumes of urgent suspected cancer dermatology referrals. In July, the service received over 658 suspected cancer referrals and weekly referrals in August was 150 per week.

BHRUT would like to advise GPs that patients being referred will have to wait longer than 14 days to be seen for their first appointment. In the meantime, additional administrative resource has been put in place in the Cancer Referral Office to

manage patients' queries regarding their future appointments. The Dermatology Service is also working hard to secure additional capacity.

Thank you for your support during this challenging period and your help in advising patients of the delays at point of referral.

**For GP queries only:** Please contact us on 01708 774801 or email [bhr-tr.crooffice@nhs.net](mailto:bhr-tr.crooffice@nhs.net)

## 8 Eastenders storyline may drive increase in Urgent Suspected Urology Cancer referrals

You may be familiar with the storyline running in Eastenders, which started on 15 August, in which one of the characters has received a diagnosis of prostate cancer. Further information can be found [here](#).

There is the potential that this may increase the numbers of people coming forward, and of Urgent Suspected Urology Cancer referrals, over the coming weeks.

## 9 Digital mental wellbeing for London

Good Thinking supports Londoners to look after their mental health and wellbeing. It has a range of free support and resources: <https://www.good-thinking.uk/>

## 10 For more information

Web: [www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk](http://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk)

Twitter: @CancerNel

Facebook: @NelCancerAlliance

Instagram: @CancerNEL

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/north-east-london-cancer-alliance/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@nelcanceralliance>

For any communications queries, please email [p.thomas6@nhs.net](mailto:p.thomas6@nhs.net)