**Why have I been referred urgently to the hospital by my GP practice?**

**Who is this leaflet for?**

This leaflet is for patients who have been referred to the hospital by their GP practice on an “Rapid Access referral pathway”. This leaflet is aimed at helping you to understand the possible reasons for the referral. It sets out what you can do to help make sure that you are seen quickly, and what to do if you aren’t.

**Why have I been referred on this urgent GP referral pathway?**

The Rapid Access referral pathway was introduced so that a specialist can see any patient with symptoms that might indicate cancer as quickly as possible. An appointment at the hospital is most likely to be offered within 7 days of referral, but definitely within 14 days of referral.

**Does this mean I have cancer?**

No it doesn’t. The majority of people referred in this way do not have cancer, but a simple or benign condition. In fact **9 out of 10 people** referred in this way do not have cancer. But it is important to see a specialist as soon as possible to exclude or confirm a cancer diagnosis.

**So why has my GP referred me?**

GPs diagnose and treat many illnesses. However, on occasion, they need to arrange for you to see a hospital doctor who specialises in your particular problem. This could be for a number of reasons, such as:

- Your GP feels your symptoms or test results need urgent investigation
- Treatment which your GP has already prescribed has not been effective

Once your GP has informed you of your referral, they will either:

- Send your details urgently to the appropriate department at a local hospital who will then contact you directly to make an appointment
- Make an appointment for you at the local hospital

**What do I need to do now?**

1. Make sure that your GP has the right address and phone number for you, including mobile number if possible.
2. If you have any concerns or questions before your appointment at the referred hospital/clinic, please discuss them with your GP.
3. The hospital will contact you by telephone or letter to confirm your appointment. A short-notice appointment is normal in this situation and means you will see a specialist quickly. If you haven’t been called by the hospital within one week of the appointment with your GP, contact your GP surgery.
4. **Please do your best to keep the hospital/clinic appointment once you have it.** If you are unable to do so, please contact the hospital/clinic you’ve been referred to as soon as possible to arrange another appointment.
5. You are welcome to take someone along with you to this appointment, should you choose to.

**More information**

You have a right to be seen by a specialist within two weeks of being urgently referred for suspected cancer by your GP. However we aim for you to be seen within 7 days of being referred.

If you have concerns about how we have managed your urgent referral, you can contact the Customer Care Team (Patient Advice & Liaison Service) at Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Leighton) by phone on: 01270-612410 or by email at: customercareteam@mcht.nhs.uk

You can find more information about the urgent suspected cancer referral pathway from the following websites:

NHS Choices – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Cancer Research UK – [www.cruk.org/urgentreferrals](http://www.cruk.org/urgentreferrals)

You can talk to a specialist nurse on either of these support lines:

Macmillan Support Line – Monday to Friday 9am to 8pm - 0808 800 0000

CRUK Nurse – Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm - 0808 800 4040