

**PATIENT INFORMATION**

**ABOUT YOUR REFERRAL TO THE  
SERIOUS, NON-SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS PATHWAY**

This information is available in other formats on request. Please ask your nursing staff to arrange this.

## **Introduction**

You have been referred to the Rapid Diagnostic Service (RDS) at Harrogate District Hospital because your GP thinks you may have a condition that needs further investigation. There are many conditions your symptoms may be linked to, including the possibility of cancer.

Please note that for the vast majority of patients, the results will **NOT** show signs of cancer or a serious condition, but it is important that we quickly identify any conditions that could need prompt treatment.

This specialist service allows us to manage and investigate your symptoms quickly. When you attend your clinic appointment you will be seen by an Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) or Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) who will ask you some questions and examine you. You may spend up to an hour at the clinic.

The ANP or CNS will be able to explain which tests you may need and ones which may happen in the future.

## **Consent**

Before any of the tests or investigations are carried out, your consent will be obtained. This is sometimes done verbally or sometimes more formally in writing. This is to ensure that you fully understand what is going to happen and why you need to have the test. The ANP or CNS will always ensure that consent has been obtained.

You will not get the results of the tests on the same day. The results will be available for your ANP or CNS to discuss with you when you come back to clinic or by telephone.

Sometimes we may refer you to other Specialist Teams for further tests or assessments. If you don't require any further tests or review then you will be referred back to your GP, often given advice about your symptoms and information about lifestyle or other advice to improve your health or manage your condition.

**Please note you should if possible, bring a friend or relative to your clinic appointments, we would encourage you to do this as sometimes a lot of information can be given to you at this time.**

The team is multidisciplinary, this means it is comprised of Doctors, Nurses and a RDS Coordinator whose main aim is to diagnose and treat patients with a possibility of a cancer. Most patients referred on the serious, non-specific symptoms pathway do not have cancer; however, our aim is to exclude a cancer diagnosis or to diagnose cancer quickly. The team meets on a weekly basis to discuss your recent test results and plan your treatment and care.

Part of the ANP or CNS role is be your keyworker is to ensure you and your family have support and information whilst undergoing investigations.

The RDS Coordinator is responsible for the coordination of your investigations and can help with non-medical related questions or enquiries.

If you need to get in touch with a member of the serious, non-specific symptoms pathway team, their office hours are:

**Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 4pm**

**Tel: 01423 557981**

The ANP and CNS have experience in helping people being investigated and diagnosed with cancers at all stages of their illness and is able to support relatives and carers in areas such as:

- Information and advice about cancers and their treatments.
- Emotional / psychological support in dealing with diagnosis for both patients and carers.
- Help with controlling symptoms
- Helpful contact with other staff and services involved in your care
- A resource for provision of financial and social support
- Signpost to other care agencies.

### **Further Appointments**

Please note your clinic appointment may need to be changed at short notice. We may need to contact you by telephone to arrange further tests, following discussion at the Multidisciplinary team meeting.

If you would like a copy of your clinic letter or written summary which is sent to your GP, please inform the Nurse when you attend the clinic. Alternatively, you can telephone the coordinator after your clinic appointment to request one.

Following your visit to the clinic you will be sent a patient satisfaction survey to complete. As the serious, non-specific symptoms pathway is a new service, completing the survey gives you and your family the opportunity to provide valuable feedback which helps to develop and make improvements to future services at Harrogate District Hospital.

