

# Teenage patient with suspected cancer seen within two days by Paediatrics thanks to a new pathway

Following the Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group (CCLG) new referral guidelines for suspected cancer in children and young people in April 2021, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (UHCW) launched a new Paediatric 2WW pathway via Consultant Connect, in November 2021. The new pathway meets the guidance of the CCLG. GPs can now use Telephone Advice & Guidance, via Consultant Connect, to rapidly speak with Paediatric Consultants at UHCW.



## Clinician experience

Dr Lucy O'Flanagan, a GP at Springfield Medical Practice in Coventry has been using the service – she comments, "It's timesaving. The service bypasses switchboard, and you get instant responses to your questions from specialist consultants." She adds, "I want to say thank you for the service and to the consultants who answer calls. This pathway will improve patient care and is more efficient for GPs."

Dr Kim Neuling has been a Consultant Paediatrician at UHCW for 11 years and answers GP queries via Consultant Connect. We asked Dr Neuling about the benefits of the new pathway:

"I have found that being able to speak directly with the GP that has seen the patient invaluable. Previously some GPs would take up the offer of telephone contact but would have to wait on hold through switchboard for a bleep response. The new system connects immediately. I am able to gather additional information that enables clearer decision making about whether the child needs to be seen the same day in our ED, or as soon as possible in clinic, or does not need to be seen as other investigations or watchful waiting can be advised. I am able to accept the patient immediately and book into clinic promptly. The e-referral form system is slower as it often takes several days to come through to a clinician to triage. The messaging system also means that additional information such as results can be shared and further secure communication can continue between the GP and consultant on the case."



## Initial patient presentation

Dr O'Flanagan shared a recent example of when she used the new pathway for a suspected childhood cancer patient:

"My patient was a teenage boy with a firm lump arising from his chest wall, costal margin area. I called the 'Paediatrics – Suspected Childhood Cancer (2WW)' line using Consultant Connect and spoke to Dr Kim Neuling, at UHCW."



## How Telephone Advice & Guidance helped

Dr Neuling saw the patient at UHCW within two days of the Telephone Advice & Guidance conversation, Dr O'Flanagan said: "I referred on a Monday, and the patient was seen on the Wednesday."

Dr O'Flanagan said the new pathway and process "definitely allowed for better patient care, and in addition, the process of requesting an appointment was much quicker to action via the Consultant Connect dashboard. I was also able to view the outcome of the referral this way."

Dr Neuling adds: "I was able to get additional information on the case and discuss the other likely causes of the abnormality so that Dr O'Flanagan could update the family prior to their appointment. This helped my communication with the family in clinic as they had already been prepared for the likely outcome."

When asked how the outcome of using the service made the patient and their parents feel, Dr O'Flanagan stated: "I am confident it made the teenager, and his parents feel reassured."

If you have any questions about this service, please get in touch on 01865 261467 or at [hello@consultantconnect.org.uk](mailto:hello@consultantconnect.org.uk)