

Peninsula Cancer Alliance (PCA) Lung Cancer Pathway Development Project (PDP)

This project was done in collaboration with MSD and Peninsula Cancer Alliance

January 2022 - November 2022

WHAT IS A PDP?

The Pathway Development Programme (PDP) is a collaborative working agreement between MSD and the NHS designed to support healthcare providers to optimise cancer pathways, enabling patients to be diagnosed and treated faster.

“ In a difficult time for the NHS with departments under capacity, any improvements have been challenging to put in place. Marked improvements have been made across the Trusts that have come from the audit recommendations that were produced by the MSD project support ”

- PCA project manager

Objectives



To optimise the lung cancer pathway in Devon and Cornwall to improve the service quality, service efficiency, productivity and patient experience. The main aim was for this to be aligned with the national optimal pathway and achievement of the lung cancer 28 day Faster Diagnostic Standard (FDS) and the 62-day Cancer Waiting Time Target.

Challenges



Across the whole region there has been an increase in the patient volumes referred into the 28-day pathway and a subsequent increase in the number of breaches. Some individual Trust level challenges were:

- Delays in diagnostic scans and tests
- Workforce challenges to the running of the Fast track lung cancer clinic
- Turnaround times for PET CT scan reporting
- Chest X-ray (CXR) referral and Radiology dealing with increasing demand on services with very limited resource
- Pathway delays due to lack of diagnostic bundling and bi-weekly multidisciplinary team meetings (MDTs)

Solution



Each Trust completed an audit of their 28-day lung FDS pathway highlighting challenges and potential pathway solutions to improving attainment of the 28-day FDS cancer wait time target.

Through working in partnership with the Peninsula Cancer Alliance, MSD collaborated with each Trust to help support the following service development initiatives in their lung cancer pathways:

- A new pathway to triage same day CT scans prior to outpatient appointments at Royal Cornwall
- Increased workforce employing a Cancer Improvement Facilitator, a Lung Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) & an advance trainee nurse practitioner at University Hospital Plymouth
- Development of Radiology service to prioritise urgent referrals at Torbay & South Devon Hospital
- Moving to weekly MDTs and implementation of diagnostic bundling at North Devon District Hospital

Peninsula Cancer Alliance serves 5 Hospital Trusts

Total patient population = 1.7 million

Lung patients impacted per year = 4,188

Impact



- As a result of the audit and improvement work, patients benefited from a faster diagnostic pathway with fewer pathway times breaching the standard overall

Lung patient breaches of the 28-day FDS reduced in the following hospitals:

18% down to 10% at Royal Cornwall

17% down to 9% at University Hospital Plymouth

19% down to 18% at Torbay & South Devon Hospital

*Data obtained from NHSE Cancer Waiting time data. Time periods compared the 4 months June-Sept 2022 against a baseline of Jan-Apr 2022