

Dear Practice teams



The challenges posed by Covid-19 have impacted across the cancer pathway from first presentation in primary care up to the treatments offered. In the coming weeks the CRUK Facilitator Programme will be offering a reduced service until further notice as some of our colleagues are currently furloughed. However, we want to reassure you that ***CRUK remains committed to supporting Cancer Alliances, CCGs, Primary Care networks and GP practices to ensure that patients with worrying symptoms continue to be investigated under appropriate Cancer pathways.***

Fewer people are presenting to their GPs with symptoms and this is impacting the whole cancer pathway. There has been a significant drop in numbers of 'urgent referrals' for cancer, overall the numbers of urgent referrals have dropped to around 25% of usual levels in England. This will have an impact on how many cancers are diagnosed at the earliest possible stage.

CRUK has updated its online cancer information for patients to include issues relating to COVID-19. It's a good resource to use if you are communicating with your patients, perhaps through new communication routes and online consultations..

- This link guides patients through having cancer symptoms during the coronavirus outbreak, **read** and includes a great video from a GP about how important it is to contact your GP: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/coronavirus/cancer-symptoms>
- This link outlines key early signs and symptoms of cancer for patients: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-symptoms>

In addition, the CRUK Cancer Helpline is always available to help your patients with queries and concerns. They can talk to the Cancer Research UK nurses on freephone 0808 800 4040, from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Safely managing patients presenting with possible cancer symptoms has added complexities at this time. We have prepared a resource pack to assist your practice in optimising your safety netting processes, while managing corona virus risks. Along with this pack ***would your practice or PCN benefit from a tailored-on line session on safety netting guidance to reflect current challenges with remote consultation and patient confidence in presenting to primary care? We can adapt sessions in line with the numbers of staff and time available.***

As I'm sure you are, we are looking ahead to cancer diagnosis and care after the virus peak. As screening activities pick up and patients re-engage with primary care, we are here to help you. Please do contact the Facilitator team if you would like to consider how we can support you further to mitigate the impact of this pandemic on the early stage of the cancer pathway for your patients.

Kind Regards

Rachel Ball Facilitator Manager and CRUK Cancer Alliance GP Stephanie Edgar

Resource pack

2020pdf Safety netting Guidance for practices

2020.pdf "Safety netting flow chart – "SN Guidance Covid-19 Flowchart FINAL.pdf"