

Diagnosing Cancer Earlier

Urology one stop clinics

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The one stop clinic:- Why is the N Lancs/S Cumbria urology model relevant?

- Busy cancer speciality
- Large volume of varied cancer work
- Serves mixed rural/urban, affluent/disadvantaged populations.
- Well proven

The background.

- About 50% of our new cancer diagnoses coming outwith the two week rule system, so see all within 2 weeks.
- Quality of GP referrals meant that diagnostics can be booked and done at first visit
- Triage of GP letters carried out prior to clinic by consultant or experienced nurse specialist.
- Patients advised by appointment letter about nature of clinic and likelihood of multiple tests at first visit. Advised that clinic might take most of morning or afternoon.
- Multiple diagnostics at first visit speeds up both positive and negative diagnoses and quickly filters out the non-cancer patients

The practice.

All patients seen within two weeks, having been booked in advance for any combination of:-

- Renal ultrasound
- Endoscopic bladder inspection
- Scrotal ultrasound
- Ultrasound guided prostate biopsies
- Urinary flow rate
- Bladder residual volume measurement
- Blood tests
- Urine dipstick test

After initial tests, patients seen at same visit by consultant/nurse specialist/middle grade according to complexity of case.

The one stop clinic:- Benefits

- Everyone seen within two weeks
- Cuts out unnecessary first clinic visit and reduces serial visits to hospital
- Fast diagnosis
- Patients and relatives love it!
- Very satisfying for clinical staff
- Holistic
- ¾ of patients require no further outpatient appointments, a majority of those being discharged to primary care.
- Reduced administration/hospital visits/transport costs. (2008 figures, £170,000 follow up clinic saving, £20,000 hospital transport saving)
- Flexible and equally suited to large hospitals or small surgeries/community clinics (the clinic can be taken to the patient).

The one stop clinic:- Challenges

- Requires real commitment
- Very different way of working
- Teamwork is vital
- Can become too successful

But would highly recommend as effective way of diagnosing cancer more quickly.

