



An overview of the safety netting pathway

This flow chart illustrates the key steps that primary care professionals can take to manage patients with potential cancer symptoms until they're explained or resolved, or the patient is referred.



Patient consultation

- ✓ Check patient contact details are up to date.

No/low suspicion of cancer

Tell the patient:

- ✓ when to return if symptoms don't resolve
- ✓ if there are any red flag symptoms or changes to look out for

- ✓ Make sure the patient understands the safety netting advice. Offer to provide this in a written format.
- ✓ Log safety netting advice in notes and code symptoms.
- ✓ Clearly communicate who is responsible for follow-up.



Repeated consultations for persistent, recurring or new symptoms

Suspicion remains low

Continue to safety net:

- ✓ Consider an alternative referral route.
- ✓ Consider a planned or patient-initiated review.
- ✓ Communicate next steps and time frames to the patient.

Cancer suspected



Further investigations

Tell the patient:

- ✓ the reason for tests
- ✓ the importance of completing and returning tests in a timely manner or attending follow-up appointments
- ✓ who will make the follow-up appointment
- ✓ when to expect results and how these will be communicated

- ✓ **GP practice system** to check test completion and patient attendance at follow-up appointments.
- ✓ **GP practice** to consider using a system that contacts patients who haven't attended tests or follow-up appointments after a set time frame.

- ✓ Make sure staff know who is responsible for communicating results to the patient.

Urgent referral is not warranted

- ✓ Consider an alternative referral route.
- ✓ Communicate results and next steps to the patient.
- ✓ Continue to monitor patient until signs and symptoms are explained or resolved.

- ✓ **Tell the patient** when to contact the GP if they experience new or recurring symptoms.

Urgent referral

- ✓ Communicate results and next steps to the patient.

Tell the patient:

- ✓ the reason for referral and testing
- ✓ who is responsible for managing them
- ✓ what to do if they don't receive an appointment as expected

