

Cancer/urgent referrals

- Practices should continue to make urgent and two week wait referrals for suspected cancers where reasonable concerns exist
- For suspected cancer referrals, if patients choose to delay their 2-week wait consultation or diagnostic test, they will be held on a waiting list and you will be informed that the patient has decided not proceed at this point
- Patients should be made aware that hospitals are putting in place alternative ways to prioritise which patients would benefit from coming to hospital for a scan or other investigation (this may mean a telephone call in the first instance)
- Wherever possible, trusts are minimising un-necessary face-to-face contact

Routine referrals

- Where appropriate please can routine patients be managed in Primary Care and not referred - we are increasing access to specialist advice to help facilitate this via the use of Consultant Connect and Advice & Guidance
- Routine referrals to Yeovil District Hospital and Taunton and Somerset Acute Trusts as well as Somerset Partnership should continue to be made where patients cannot be managed in Primary Care
- We are clarifying urgently the position with Royal United Hospital Bath however, the CCG currently understands that may be rejecting routine referrals (urgent or suspected cancer referrals should continue to be made)
- Weston Area Health Trust continues to accept all referrals
- Practices should advise patients referred on routine pathways that long delays may be expected
- Please could practices inform any patients referred via e referral that if the condition they are being referred for is not felt to be urgent, it is unlikely that appointments will be available to book. However, patients should still attempt to book, this will mean providers are aware of the referral and will contact them when appointments are available.
- We are working to agree with providers how they will triage appointments to 'virtually' or otherwise see patients who most urgently need to be seen
- We are working to agree how patients will be signposted if they experience a worsening of their condition whilst waiting for a routine appointment