Why have I been Referred to hospital under the “2 – week wait” appointment system?

Information for patients

Please make every effort to attend your appointment.

You can get more information about the “two week” appointment system from NHS Direct on 0845 46 47
You can also visit:

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
Your General Practitioner (GP) or Dentist has asked for you to have a hospital appointment within two weeks. The “two week” appointment system was introduced so that a specialist would see any patient with symptoms that might indicate cancer as quickly as possible.

**Does this mean I have cancer?**

No, it doesn’t. More than 70% of patients referred under the “two week” appointment system do not have cancer, but a simple condition.

**So why has my GP referred me?**

GPs diagnose and treat many illnesses themselves. However, on occasion they need to arrange for you to see a specialist hospital doctor. This could be for a number of reasons, such as:

- The treatment already prescribed has not been effective.
- Your symptoms need further investigation.
- Investigations your GP arranged have shown some abnormal results.

**What symptoms might need an urgent referral?**

**Symptoms such as:**

- A lump that does not go away.
- A change in the size, shape or colour of a mole.
- Abnormal bleeding
- A change in bowel or bladder habits
- Continuous tiredness and / or unexplained weight loss.

There are national referral guidelines for your GP to use to make a decision about whether it is appropriate to refer you for an appointment within two weeks.

**What do I need to do now?**

- Make sure that your GP has your correct address and telephone number, including mobile number.
- Your GP or a member of practice staff will have made your appointment using Choose and Book and given you the confirmation.
- You must let the hospital know immediately if you are unable to attend your appointment so that it can be rearranged or offered to someone else.

**It is important that you arrange another date and time if you cancel your appointment.**

**At the hospital**

- At your first hospital appointment more information will be given to you.
- Please feel free to bring someone with you to this appointment – do not feel that you have to be alone.

It is important to remember that even though you are getting an urgent referral, being referred to a specialist does not necessarily mean that you have cancer.