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## Beauty, Health & Fitness

30 Jan 2015 Fri 10:52:52 am

### London Cancer Alliance Launches New Guidelines To Improve Outcomes For Patients With Skin Cancer



New guidelines launched today (29 July 2014) by the London Cancer Alliance (LCA) aim to ensure consistently high standards of care for patients with skin cancer across south and west London.

Around 60,000 new cases of skin cancers (malignant melanoma and non-melanoma) are reported in England and Wales each year. Although less common, Malignant Melanoma is the major cause of death from skin cancer and accounts for 1% of all cancer deaths in the UK.

The LCA's Skin Pathway Group worked collaboratively with clinicians across LCA member organisations – the 16 NHS Trusts in south and west London – to develop these guidelines based on recognised best practice and drawing on the collective expertise of LCA skin cancer specialists.

The 'LCA Skin Cancer Guidelines' have been produced for all healthcare professionals in the LCA area involved in the diagnosis and treatment of skin cancers. The guidelines recommend that all health professionals, whether in a community or hospital setting, who treat patients with skin cancer should be a member of a multidisciplinary team. There should be two levels of these multidisciplinary teams for the treatment of skin cancer: local and specialist.

Professor Barry Powell, Chair of LCA Skin Pathway Group and Professor in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust said: "Avoiding exposure to UV light from the sun and artificial sources is the most effective way to prevent skin cancer but we know that, due to current lifestyles, rates of diagnosis are increasing. The LCA Skin Cancer Guidelines are vitally important to ensure all patients in south and west London experience the same high level of care and treatment, as well as setting out best practice for communication, survivorship and follow up."

Nick Hyde, LCA Clinical Director said: "These guidelines represent a great deal of collaborative working from our 16 member organisations and stakeholders to ensure the very best approach and management for people with skin cancer in south and west London. They build on previous guidance and will help ensure that all patients in our area receive the very best care and treatment."

The guidelines make specific recommendations for the management of basal cell carcinomas (BCCs) (which should be agreed locally between CCGs, GP practices and Secondary Care providers) including: not referring with a 2-week wait rule or as urgent; diagnosing, treating and following up patients by an accredited GP or local skin cancer specialist who are members of the local or specialist skin multidisciplinary team; and only using accredited health professionals for operating on and biopsies of BCCs.

The following recommendations are also made for the management of higher risk and complex skin cancers: that diagnosis, treatment and follow up of high risk and complex skin cancers must be undertaken within a specialist centre; the 2-week wait rule and urgent suspected cancer pathway should be used; and skin cancer on specific and high risk anatomical sites (anal and perianal, external female genitalia, lymphomas of the skin, head and neck, sarcoma involving skin, urology/penile) have specific arrangements within the guidelines for their management.

The London Cancer Alliance was established in 2011 as the integrated cancer system across west and south London and works in partnership with 16 NHS Trusts, primary care, the voluntary and third sector and patients.

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