

9.02 Was Covid the Culprit? An Audit into Red Flag Cancer Pathway Timelines during the Pandemic.

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Introduction: The COVID pandemic has affected the Southern Health & Social Care Trust (SHSCT) lung cancer service. With reduced clinic access, and regional loss of Thoracic surgery theatre time only some of the services impacted. Our aim was to assess the performance of the SHSCT lung cancer service to facilitate service improvement.

Methods: A retrospective audit of GP referrals to the SHSCT Lung Cancer Pathway against the Northern Ireland Cancer Network (NICAN) lung pathway (2014) over 4 months (01/11/2021 to 28/02/2022). Data collected was from both Cancer Patient Pathway System and Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record.

Results: 195 GP referrals were received, with 135 attending clinic. 36 patients were diagnosed with lung cancer. 14 patients received radical treatment, 14 received palliative oncology treatment and 8 best supportive care.

Two of 28 patients (7%) had a decision to treat agreed with patient within 31 days of referral, median 63 days (IQR: 40 -103). Nine of 28 patients (32%) had definitive treatment commenced with 62 days; median 64 days (IQR 53 - 117).

Conclusions: The majority of GP referrals to lung cancer service are not meeting the NICAN pathway timeline, highlighting the need for change.