

CANCER PATHWAYS  
Information for patients

IS-0469E

# Procedures and tests for suspected cancer patients

You have been referred for assessment by the specialist health service because there is a suspicion of a cancer diagnosis. Specialised procedures and tests will determine whether or not you have cancer. If it is shown that you do have cancer, your treatment will be planned in consultation with you.

During your doctor's appointment or your initial assessment at the hospital, you will be told about the procedures and tests that are planned for you.

Most patients who are referred to a Cancer pathway are assessed at the hospital. Some patients have one or more of their procedures and tests carried out by a private practice doctor or a private hospital.

- **What is a Cancer pathway?**

Cancer pathways are intended to give patients and relatives predictability and security and consist of national standardised cancer pathways, which are discipline- and target-based.

The aim is to speed up patient assessments and the start of treatment and minimise waiting times, in order to make the assessment period as predictable and stress-free as possible for you.

Cancer pathways and pathway timescales are not a legal right. The national Cancer pathways describe the ideal pathway for most patients. The hospital will do its best to ensure that patients with suspected cancer complete their Cancer pathway within the time framework described in the pathway concerned.

- **What are pathway timescales?**

Pathways define the number of calendar days that each part of the assessment should take, how long it should take from your first hospital appointment until your suspected cancer has either

been confirmed or disproven, and when your treatment should start if you need to undergo treatment. In the case of some patients, the Cancer pathway may have to be extended for medical reasons. One possible reason is that the patient may have another illness which has to be assessed, stabilised or treated before their cancer assessment and any cancer treatment can start. Patients can sometimes ask to delay their assessment or treatment themselves.

- **Procedures and tests for suspected cancer**

When you attend your first appointment at the hospital, you will be told about the procedures and tests that are relevant for you and when they will be carried out. Various types of procedures and tests are normally carried out. During the assessment, your suspected cancer will either be confirmed and you will be given a diagnosis, or it will be disproven. You may also be referred for assessment for an illness other than cancer. If the assessment indicates that you have cancer, you will be given information on possible treatments and what will happen next.

- **Cancer pathways in Norway**

In 2015, the health service introduced a total of 28 Cancer pathways. Of these, 26 are disease-specific pathways, and there is also a Cancer pathway for metastasis (spreading) of unknown origin, in addition to a Diagnostic pathway for patients with non-specific symptoms of a serious illness which could be cancer.

**Notes**