



# SSCA Suspected Head and Neck Cancer Referral Guidance

23% of all head and neck cancers affect the pharynx and 16% the larynx (NCIN, 2009). The SSCA High Priority Pathway Group (HPPG) recommend including symptoms affecting the pharynx (base of tongue, oropharynx, nasopharynx, pyriform sinus, hypopharynx, tonsil and a proportion of floor of mouth and palate) Pharyngeal cancer affects younger people (40-60 years) so the HPPG recommend lowering the age threshold to 40 years of age for suspected pharyngeal cancers.

## STRIDOR IS AN EMERGENCY AND REQUIRES SAME DAY REFERRAL

### Risk Factors for Head and Neck Cancer include:

- Smoking
- Ex-smoker
- Other tobacco use
- Betel nut
- HPV

- previous treatment for lymphoma)
- **Alcohol Consumption**
- **HPV**
- Other risk factors

Previous irradiation to head and neck (e.g. Very urgent concurrent CHEST X-RAY to be performed for patients presenting with HOARSENESS and UNEXPLAINED NECK LUMP to exclude lung/haematological cancer/infectious diseases

The X-ray request form should state that this is a very urgent request (to be performed within 48 hours) The possibility of cancer diagnosis should be discussed with the patient and safety-netting / follow-up arrangements should be made.

### Reasons for Suspected Cancer Referral

# Laryngeal/Pharyngeal Cancer

- Unexplained lump in the neck / throat
- ≥45 years without risk factors (or ≥40 years if risk factors, e.g. History of drug use or smoker) OR
- Persistent unexplained hoarseness of voice

# Consider referral if ≥40 years old with

- persistent dysphagia
- persistent odynophagia
- persistent otalgia

### Oral/Lip Cancer

- ≥3 weeks unexplained ulceration in the oral cavity
- Persistent and unexplained lump on the lip or in the oral cavity
- Persistent and unexplained lump in the neck

A red or white patch in the oral cavity suggestive of erythroleukoplakia and erythroplakia Exclude geographic tongue

#### Thyroid Cancer

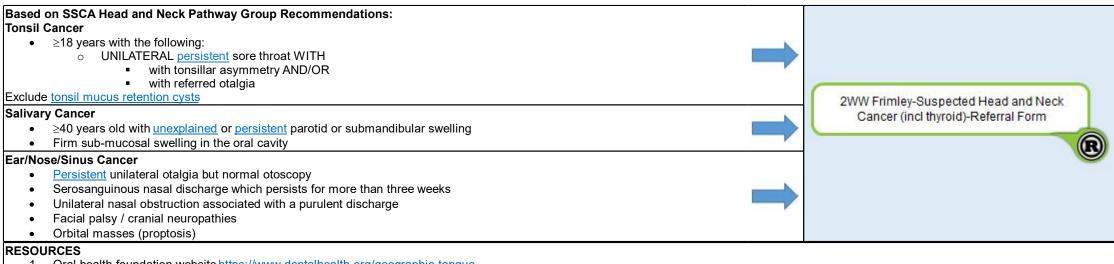
- Unexplained thyroid lump with or without dysphonia
- Ultrasound suggestive of thyroid cancer



2WW Frimley-Suspected Head and Neck Cancer (incl thyroid)-Referral Form







- 1. Oral health foundation website https://www.dentalhealth.org/geographic-tonque
- NICE guidelines. Suspected cancer: recognition and referral, NG12 (2015)https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng12/chapter/Recommendations-organised-by-site-of-cancer#head-and-neck-cancers
- 3. NICE guidelines. Improving outcomes in head and neck cancers, CSG6 (2004)https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/csg6

Developed in collaboration with NHS Surrey and Sussex Cancer Alliance

#### ASCOT • BRACKNELL • FARNHAM • MAIDENHEAD • NORTH EAST HAMPSHIRE • SLOUGH • SURREY HEATH • WINDSOR

		_	
Contact:			Review Date:
Contact Title:			Date Updated:
Contact Email:			New Review Date:
Date First Uploaded:	March 2023		

Review Date:	December 2024
Date Updated:	June 2023
New Review Date:	

Feedback Contact: DXSfrimleyICS@nhs.net (Note, patient information is not to be sent to this address)

FHC3292