

Chair: Susan Douglas-Scott CBE
Chief Executive: Carolynne O'Connor

14th August 2025

Dear colleagues,

New Scottish Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer

The Scottish Government commissioned the Centre for Sustainable Delivery to undertake an evidence-based clinical review of the Scottish Referral Guidelines (SRGs) for Suspected Cancer, which has now completed.

SRGs support healthcare professionals to identify and refer people with clinical features suspicious of cancer at the earliest opportunity.

In collaboration with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) and Cancer Research UK (CRUK), extensive engagement was undertaken from multidisciplinary clinical teams, in primary and secondary care, across NHS Scotland. Alongside this, hundreds of pieces of evidence were analysed and considered.

Published on 6th August 2025, Boards now have six months to update referral templates and criteria with local e-health teams. After this point, Boards will be expected to adhere to the Guidelines in both primary and secondary care, to support earlier diagnosis efforts.

New urgent suspicion of cancer (USC) referral criteria can be accessed via the [Right Decision Service](#) website and app ('Right Decisions: Health & Care').

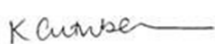
To support education and dissemination, a CfSD hosted webinar is scheduled for 23rd September, 12-1pm ([register here](#)), and a series of short videos highlighting key changes will be coming soon to Scotland's free primary care education platform, GatewayC.

Yours sincerely,



Rory Mackenzie

Interim Deputy
National Clinical Director



Katie Cuthbertson

National Director

For information:

- NHS Board Chief Executives
- NHS Board Medical Directors
- NHS Board Nurse Directors
- NHS Board Primary Care Leads
- Health and Social Care Partnership Clinical Directors
- CfSD Champions

For action:

- General Practitioners
- Practice Nurses
- Community Pharmacists
- Dental Practitioners
- Optometrists
- NHS Board Cancer Clinical Leads
- NHS Board Cancer Managers

Enquiries:



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