



# Yorkshire Cancer Network Developing Sustainable Lung Cancer Pathways

## Why was the project undertaken?

Lean Healthcare Academy worked with the Yorkshire Cancer Network to help them to improve the patient experience and ultimately save lives by shortening and simplifying the Lung Cancer pathways across the network. A key driver was that Trusts across the network were failing to hit and sustain the government standard of a 62 day limit between referral and first definitive treatment (FDT) for life saving surgery. This was greatly increasing the risk of patients dying as a result of late diagnosis and treatment.

## Findings

The LHA coordinated and managed a series of complex and diverse Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) held at each locality across the network. Using Lean principles, each referral pathway along with one of the extended surgical pathways was reviewed by a team comprising representatives from 7 Acute and 6 Primary Care Trusts.

- Yorkshire Cancer Network partners struggled to consistently achieve national cancer waiting times targets of urgent referral to first treatment within 62 days
- Large variation in methods of engagement and referral, the number of process steps that each patient journey included and the lack of overall awareness of this journey.
- Negative impact on patients and other departments, of having pathway milestones designed around hospital diaries rather than the needs of the patient.

## Outcome

Time from referral to FDT has been reduced to within government targets meaning that more patients fall within the window of opportunity and receive life extending treatment. A huge reduction in the number of pathway steps has been achieved. The original 94 steps have been culled to just 49 and a future state map has this number penned at 15 – 39. There is no longer a rush to get patients into treatment before they breach the 62 day target which allows patients thinking time to make an informed decision about their treatment.

Rob Webster, chief executive of NHS Calderdale and chair of the YCN management board, said: "This programme is an excellent example of how clinicians and managers can be supported to deliver a higher quality service by reducing waste. The NHS will need to do more of this work if it is to meet its quality and productivity challenge."



Leeds Teaching Hospitals Group

## To find out more about this case study contact:

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## Value Added

- Time from referral to first definitive treatment reduced to within government targets
- Patients now have time to make an informed decision about their treatment
- Pathway steps reduced to 49 from 94
- Network wide radical re-design of lung cancer pathways
- Teams from 13 Trusts brought together sharing best practice ideas