



The impact on users and patients of reducing turnaround times in histopathology

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Objectives

- Histopathology
 - Turnaround times reduced from 13 to 4 days (average)
 - 30% in 7 days - September 2009
 - 97% in 7 days & 47% in 3 days - December 2010
- Are the clinicians aware? What are they doing about it?
- Are patients receiving earlier:
 - Results
 - MDT discussion
 - Management plans.

The importance of histopathology work can only be realised if clinicians are aware of the reduced turnaround times and translating this into benefits for patients.

Methods

- Engaged high volume user as active member of project
- Project presented:
 - Executive team meeting
 - Cancer strategy day
 - Cancer board
 - Medical division meeting
 - Medical grand round
 - GP pathology day
- Written about in:
 - Trust Gazette
 - Trust Annual Report
- One-to-one meetings with clinicians- gastroenterology, dermatology, gynaecology and urology
- Won first prize in Trust 'dragons den' award for in-house innovative database design.

Results

Unexpected malignancies

- Up to 10 cases per year
- Previously could sit in 'routine' pile for weeks as cases were prioritised and reported according to clinical demand/urgency
- Now reported first-in-first-out.

Earlier discussion at MDM

Urology patients with suspected malignancy

- Biopsied on Friday
- Discussed at MDM on following Tuesday am
- Patients given result and management plan Tuesday pm.

A whole week saved!

Fewer follow-up appointments?

'When I see complex surgical patients for suture removal at one week, I can now give them their result and discharge them straight away which means one less follow-up.'

Consultant Dermatologist

25 fewer outpatient slots required per month.

Consultant Gynaecologist

- A more patient-focussed service with a reduction in the patient journey especially if a malignancy is found
- Fewer problems with breach dates
- Fewer phone calls from patients about their results
- Confidently giving patients appointments at two weekly intervals if needed.

Conclusions

'This will ultimately provide a much improved, faster and safer service for patients.'

Chair of the Patients' Panel

