

Implementing the National Optimal Lung Cancer Pathway

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Introduction

The National Optimal Lung Cancer pathway (NOLCP), issued in August 2017 is an aspirational framework to reduce the time from patient referral to starting treatment. It specifies that CXR's should be reported within 24 hours and staging CT's should be reported within 72 hours of the CXR.

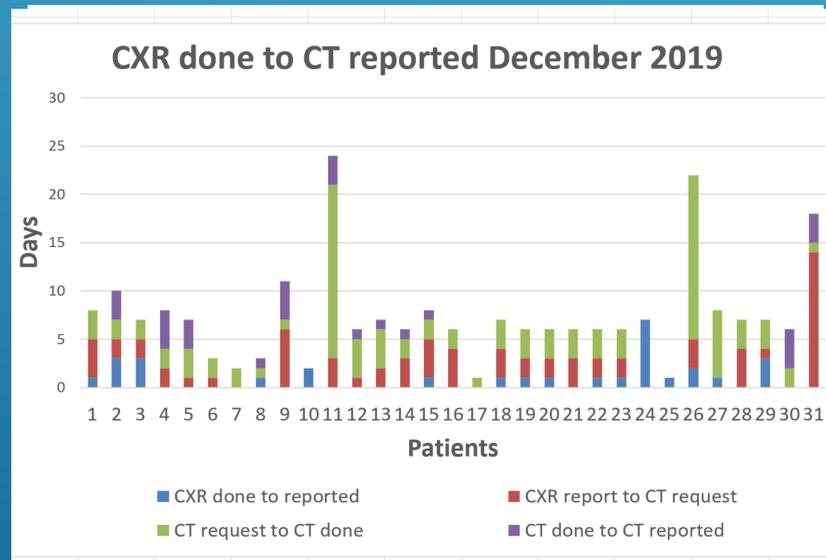
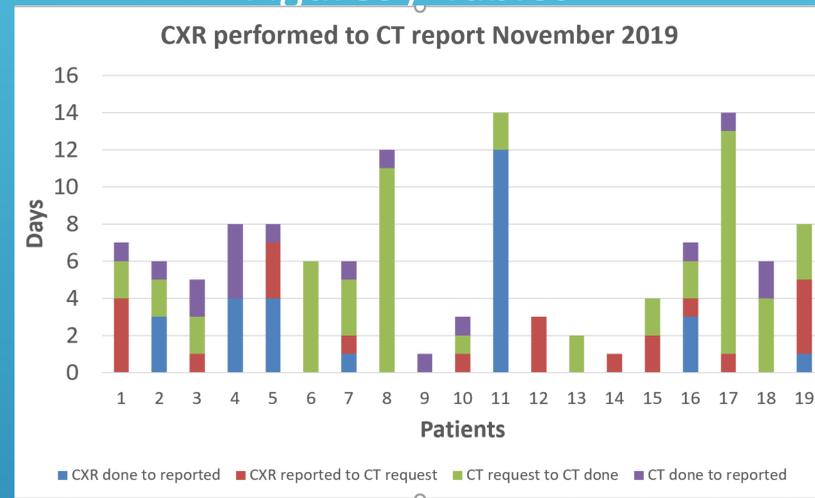
Aims

A retrospective re-audit comparing reporting times with NOLCP targets before and after introducing a dedicated general practice CXR work list

Methodology

Reports for 50 consecutive patients referred to the lung cancer MDT following an abnormal CXR were examined. Times between the CXR and staging CT request, performance and report were calculated.. Chi-square test was used for statistical analysis.

Figures / Tables



Results

36/50 patients (72%) had their CXR reported within 24 hours now compared to 5/15 (33%) in December 2018, $p=0.006$. 9/50 patients (18%) had their CXR and CT reported within 72 hours vs 1/15 (7%), $p=0.29$. Median time from CXR being performed to CT reported was 6 days.

The largest delay occurred between the CT being requested and performed (median 6 days) often due to patient factors (patient availability or transport issues). Median time from the CT being performed to reported was 1 day.

Conclusion

The GP CXR work list has improved compliance with the CXR reporting target however we fall short on the CT target.

Artificial intelligence software designed to identify suspicious CXR abnormalities which are confirmed or refuted by a radiologist prior to the patient leaving the department might increase the number of same day staging CT's and decrease CT delays.

References

1. https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/sites/default/files/lung_cancer_implementation_guide_august_2017.pdf

Figure note

An outlier from the data has been excluded from the graphs as total time from CXR to CT report was 105 days . Patient 4 had their CXR and CT performed on the same day and both studies reported 4 days later (total time from CXR to CT report was 4 days) however the graph is unable to display the simultaneous actions