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Background

Cancer diagnosed following emergency presentation is associated with poorer outcomes due to late presentation, advanced disease and concurrent acute ill health. Tower Hamlets CCG and Barts Health wanted to understand their own performance in order to learn and introduce quality improvement for patients presenting along this emergency pathway.

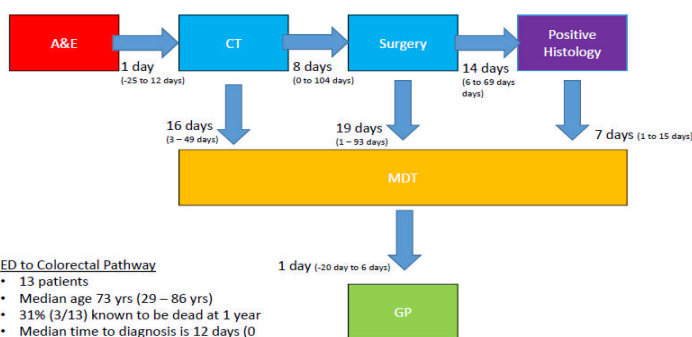
Methods

London Cancer collected all cancer diagnosed through Barts Health's three A&E departments (Newham University, Royal London and Whipps Cross University) between January and August 2013. Electronic health records were then used to map the patient journeys with view to identify areas for improvement.

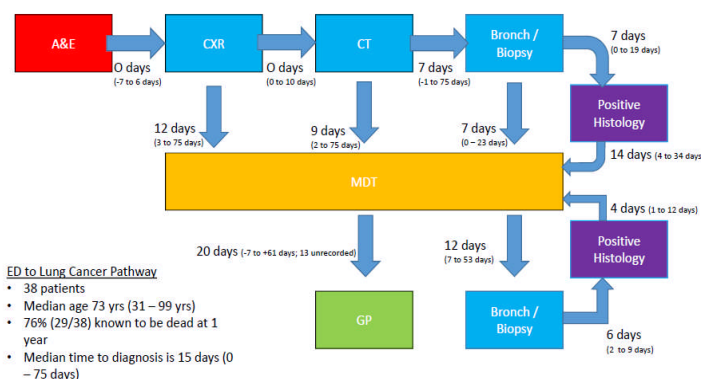
Results

Newham had 52 patients, 52% male, and median age 71 years. Royal London had 97 patients, 61% male and median age 73 years. Whipps Cross 134 patients, 46% male and median age 73 years. Lung and colorectal were the most common cancers identified. The third most common varied: breast at Newham, head and neck at Royal London and upper gastrointestinal for Whipps Cross. Treatment intent was recorded as curative for only 19% of patients. 55% are alive one year from audit. For colorectal cancer the median time to imaging, diagnostic procedure and diagnosis were 1, 8 and 12 days respectively. Median time to inform GP of diagnosis was 1 day with all being informed by 6 days. There was 31% mortality. For lung cancer the median time to imaging, diagnostic procedure and diagnosis were 0 (i.e. day of presentation), 7 and 15 days respectively. It took a median 20 days to inform the GP of diagnosis with no record of return for 34% of patients. There was 76% mortality.

Mapping diagnosis of colorectal cancer following A&E presentation



Mapping diagnosis of lung cancer following A&E presentation



Conclusions

In-depth local analysis of system-wide data has shown differences at three sites run by one Trust as well as differences between cancer pathways. This data is being used to drive change within and between primary and secondary care as well as improve communication.

Contact

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