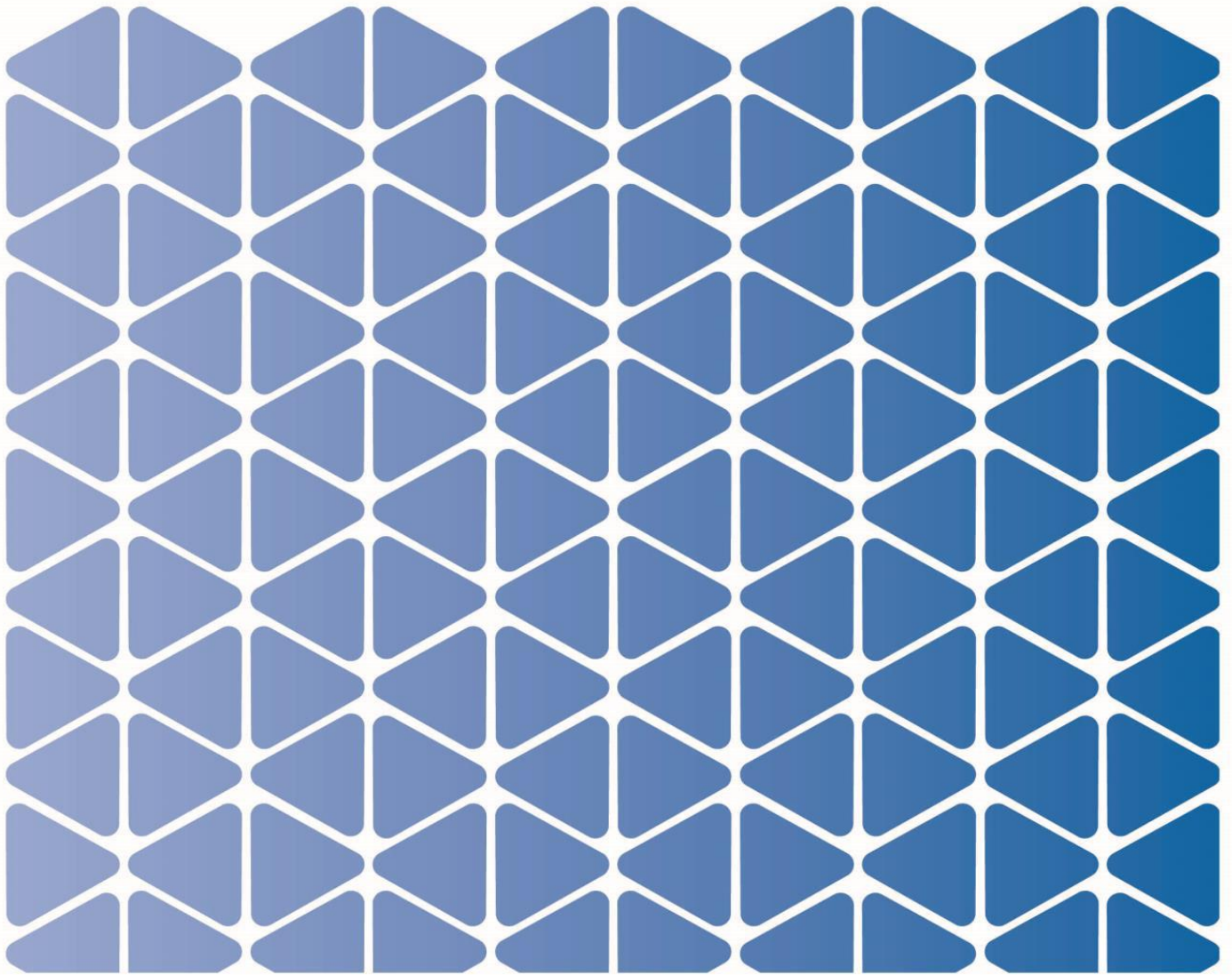




PATIENT INFORMATION

PULMONARY NODULES



You have recently had a CT scan which has identified a pulmonary nodule.

What is a Pulmonary Nodule?

A pulmonary nodule is a small area of roundish shadowing or “spot” in your lung which measures 3cm or less. It does not usually cause any symptoms but can be seen on a CT scan and sometimes on a chest x-ray. A person may have several nodules.

What causes pulmonary nodules?

Pulmonary nodules are very common. Approximately 1 in 4 older people who smoke or who have smoked in the past have pulmonary nodules. People who have never smoked may also have pulmonary nodules. The vast majority of pulmonary nodules are benign (non-cancerous) and may have been caused by scarring from previous lung infections. People may not be aware that they have had an infection in their lung previously. Pulmonary nodules sometimes occur in people with other conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis. In a very small number of people the nodule could be an early lung cancer or a secondary cancer that has spread from elsewhere in the body.

Diagnosing the cause of a pulmonary nodule

Nodules are often found when a person has a CT scan for another reason. It is not easy to know the cause of a nodule from one CT scan and because they are so small, doing a biopsy (taking a piece of the nodule and examining it) is usually impossible or potentially risky. We usually keep an eye on the nodule by repeating the CT scan after a certain amount of time to see if it grows. Most people with a nodule need multiple scans over 1-4 years. Cancerous nodules will eventually grow although this can happen slowly. Benign (non- cancerous) nodules may also grow very slowly, although many do not grow at all. If the nodule grows or changes your doctor may arrange for you to have further tests.

What happens next?

A repeat CT scan will be arranged usually at 3 or 12 months from the initial scan. If your nodule stays the same or shrinks we may be able to discharge you. If your nodule grows or changes you may need further tests which may include a different type of scan called a PET scan. Your hospital doctor will decide how long we need to follow up the nodule with more scans and whether you need a PET scan based on a number of factors including the size and type of the nodule, your age, whether you have any history of any cancer, a history of smoking, your general health and medical problems and your own wishes about further investigations or potential treatments.

How will I get my results?

You will be informed of your results of your scans either by letter, a telephone consultation or at an outpatient appointment. Your scan may need to be discussed in a specialist lung team meeting. Please note that following your CT scan, we cannot give you any results until it has been reported by a radiologist. It can take up to 6 weeks for you to receive the results of your CT scan. Your GP will also be kept informed about your investigations and progress.

If you have any further questions please contact the respiratory secretarial team on and your query will be directed to a doctor from the pulmonary nodule service.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PET@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.