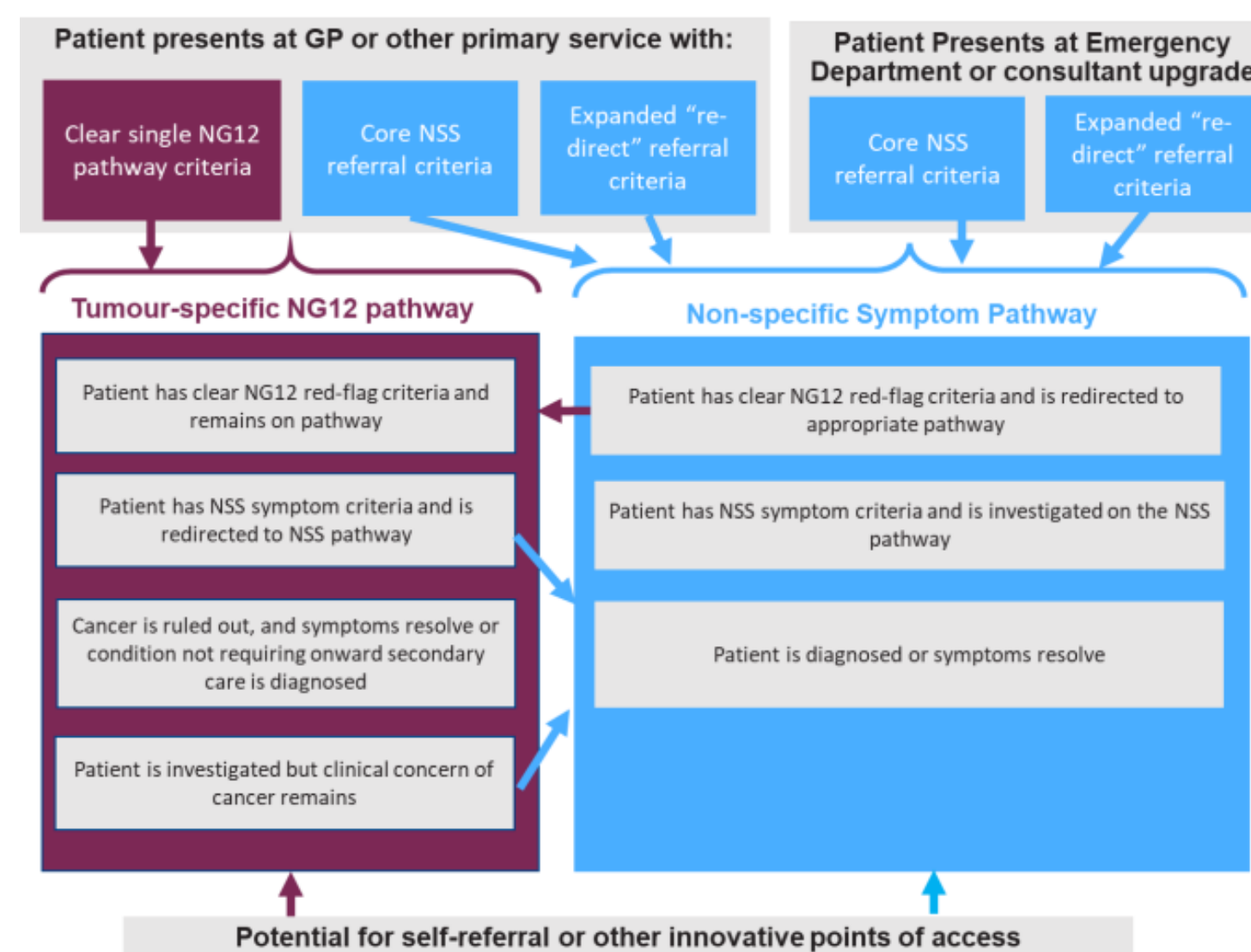




Background

The Faster Diagnosis Standard has been introduced to ensure patients who are referred for suspected cancer receive a timely diagnosis. The standard ensures patients will be diagnosed or have cancer ruled out within 28 days of being referred urgently by their GP for suspected cancer. For patients who are diagnosed with cancer, it means their treatment can begin as soon as possible. For those who are not, they can have their minds put at rest more quickly. Non-specific symptoms pathways are intended to cover the cohort of patients who do not fit clearly into a single 'urgent cancer' referral pathway, but who are nonetheless at risk of being diagnosed with cancer.



What are 'Non-Specific Symptoms'?

'Non-specific' symptoms include unexplained weight loss, fatigue, abdominal pain or nausea; and/or a GP 'gut feeling' about cancer.

Previously, these patients may have:

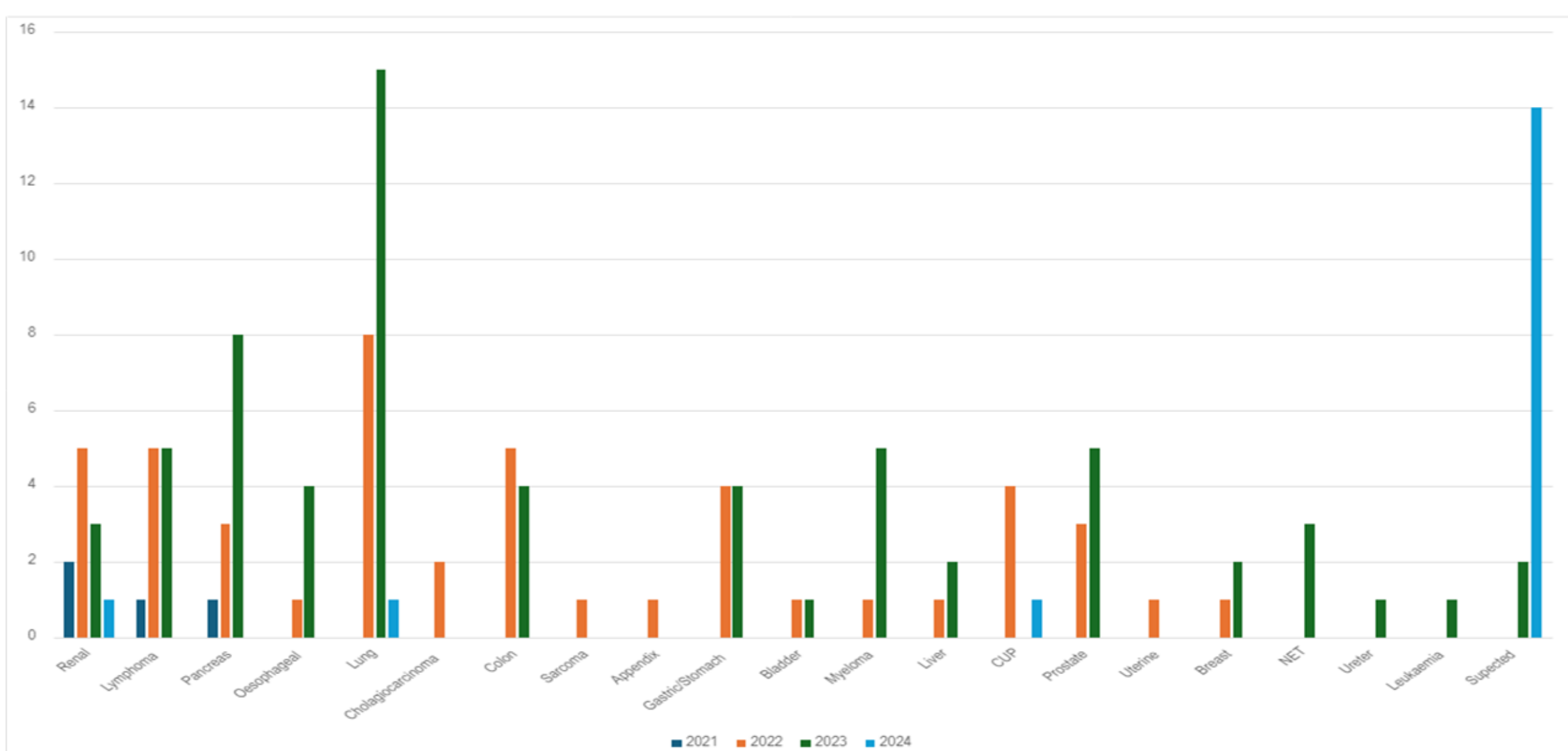
- seen their GP several times before referral
- been more likely to attend in an emergency setting, such as a hospital accident and emergency department
- presented with cancer at an advanced stage
- been referred onto multiple urgent pathway.

The UHB Non-Specific Symptoms Pathway Model

The Team: Consultant General Physician (Professor Jamie Coleman), Advanced Practitioner/Project Lead, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Patient Case Support Worker, Medical Secretary. Patients referred have a comprehensive history taken, including details of their symptoms, and will usually receive a range of tests, including blood tests, chest X-ray, CT scan and endoscopy to rapidly progress them to the most appropriate diagnostic and treatment pathway.

Presenting Symptoms	Criteria	Duration (weeks/months)
Age 40+ AND unexplained weight loss (either documented >5% in three months or with strong clinical suspicion)	Unexplained weight loss Amount (kgs) {free text} [o/e weight] - most recent reading [o/e weight] - previous reading x 1	
Age 40+ AND constitutional symptoms (+4 weeks)	Persistent and unexplained constitutional symptoms such as loss of appetite, fatigue, nausea and / or vomiting, malaise, bloating. (Document in free text below)	
Age 40+ AND persistent pain (+4 weeks)	Persistent and unexplained pain such as vague abdominal pain, bone pain or progressive pain. (Document in free text below)	
Any age	GP 'gut feeling' An intuitive opinion that there is something seriously wrong with your patient which might have cancer as a possible cause (Document in free text below)	Duration (weeks/months) /

Cancer Diagnoses



Reference: B1332-NHS-Cancer-Programme-Faster-Diagnosis-Framework-v5.pdf (england.nhs.uk)

UHB data September 2021 to present (National data from NHS England)

Total referral numbers: 2665 (116,000)
 Cancer conversion rate: 4.85% (8.5%)
 Non cancer conversion rate: 68% (43%)
 Faster Diagnosis Standard: 62% (71%)

Contact: Non-Specific Symptoms Team
 Phone: 07435 010920 Email: RDS@uhb.nhs.uk

Our Vision

- Self-referral: particularly focusing on hard-to-engage communities
- Cross site clinical capacity
- Same day clinic with dedicated outpatient CT slots for selected patients
- Emergency department diversion of patients with suspected cancer, not requiring admission, into HOT clinics for diagnostic workup