

## **R024: Pathways to a Cancer Diagnosis: Monitoring variation in the patient journey across Northern Ireland – QUB and BSO**

Although cancer patient survival in Northern Ireland is improving, it remains low internationally. Many “late presentation” cases are diagnosed when cancer has already spread to other parts of the body (Stage IV cancer); this represents almost 1 in 5 cancers in Northern Ireland.

Public Health England have been monitoring the “routes” by which cancer is detected for a number of years, using a methodology based on using routinely collected data sources to work backwards to examine the sequence of events that led to a cancer diagnosis. Based on this analysis they classified patients into eight broad routes. These range from the earliest possible intervention which is “Screen Detected” to “Death Certificate Only”.

The primary aim of the study is to explore whether robust measures for routes-to-diagnosis can be reproduced for Northern Ireland.

By combining Northern Ireland equivalent datasets in a secure environment we aim to apply the Public Health England Routes-to-Diagnosis Algorithm and for the first time produce a comprehensive overview of the Routes-to-Diagnosis for cancers detected between 2009-2016 in Northern Ireland.

The second aim of this study is to measure statistical variation across Northern Ireland in patients moving through different routes-to-diagnosis. Measures will be presented on funnel plots presented in an interactive tool whereby varying cancer sites, health geographies (from GP practice level up), and time periods can be explored.

It is hoped that reliable evidence of variation across health geographies will stimulate further research and/or interventions to increase the number of patients moving through routes-to-diagnosis that are associated with better prognosis.