

18 November 2019

Ms Tamsin Farrugia
Senior Project Officer
Cancer Australia
Locked Bag 3
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Via email: Tamsin.Farrugia@canceraustralia.gov.au

Dear Ms Farrugia,

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) thanks Cancer Australia for the invitation to provide comment on the draft update of *Investigating symptoms of lung cancer: a guide for health professionals*.

We believe this resource provides helpful information, and we acknowledge and appreciate the hard work that has gone into this updating this draft. We provide the following comments for your consideration.

1. First page of guide

We recommend the following revisions:

- *Symptoms and signs of lung cancer* – the symptom of fatigue is quite broad and requires further clarification. GPs see many patients with fatigue, and it can be a symptom of many conditions. A delineation between major vs minor risk factors would also be helpful.
- *Early detection and diagnosis of lung cancer improves chances of survival* – this graph could be removed, as it is not an essential component of the resource. Instead it could be placed on an accompanying landing page.
- *Multidisciplinary care* – this information could be more specific, particularly highlighting what specialists the patient should be referred to.
- *Table 1 – Radiation doses for various sources of radiation* – along with the early detection graph (as per the above), this table could also be removed and placed on a landing page.

2. Second page of guide / Algorithm

The algorithm could be further simplified to make it easier to interpret. Repetitious information could also be removed to create more space for the algorithm. Our recommendations are:

- *Symptoms and signs* – this is already covered on the first page of the guide. Removing this from the second page avoids repetition and provides more space for this complex algorithm.
- *Colouring* – the colours could be simplified. This algorithm may be printed on black and white printers, and as such, many different shadings would be lost. The two lighter red colours could be made into one, as they are not meaningfully different. Additionally, the 'massive haemoptysis / stridor' box is the only emergency department coloured box, so it could be bolded instead.
- If possible, the 'massive haemoptysis/stridor box' along with the emergency department box could be moved to the left of the 'persistent or unexplained haemoptysis' box, which would make the algorithm cleaner.

3. General comments

- A statement to acknowledge that this guide may need to be adapted to local contexts (for example, rural/remote areas and low resource settings) would be helpful.
- We recommended a short statement on lung cancer screening (or referring to position statements on lung cancer screening) also be included.

Thank you again for allowing the RACGP to provide comment on the draft guide *Investigating symptoms of lung cancer – a guide for health professionals*.

Yours sincerely



Dr Harry Nespolon
President