



Skin and urology diagnostic histopathology Pathway Development Programme within the Lancashire Teaching Hospital Trust



This was a collaborative working project between MSD, the Lancashire Teaching Hospital Trust and Lancashire and South Cumbria Cancer Alliance.*

Objective

To optimise the Skin and Urology histopathology diagnosis pathway, with the target of achieving the Royal College of Pathologists Key Performance Indicator (RCPATH KPI) of 90% of samples reported within 10 calendar days.[†]

Through implementation of our Pathway Development Programme, MSD provided project management support to assess the turnaround times from receipt of sample to diagnostic result reporting.

A gap analysis identified the following as areas to focus on:[‡]



Recruitment of a pathologist and a biomedical scientist.



Expansion of the specimen reception area.



Improvement of labelling and histopathology request processes.



Optimisation of specimen prioritisation, allocation, triage and reporting processes.

"Segregation of specimen work streams has allowed efficient triage of the suspected cancer cases, reduced risk to patients and allowed timely interventions when requisition issues arise."

*Carron Wilson,
Lead Biomedical Scientist*

Patient benefits:^{‡1}



Faster diagnosis and shorter treatment pathways.



Urology: 10-day reporting increased by 44% to 88%.



Skin: Unfortunately, a similar result was not displayed in the skin pathway, where, 10-day reporting had a 10% decrease to 45%.

NHS benefits:[‡]

Optimised service delivery through:



Dedicated internal communications.



Improved workflows.



Recruitment of additional staff.

MSD benefits:[‡]

- Gained a better understanding of the impact histopathology has on time to treatment initiation
- This collaboration may have enabled more patients to access innovative treatments in line with NICE guidance[§]

MSD are committed to working in partnership with the NHS to enhance current capacity and service delivery. Please use the contact details below to arrange a discussion with a member of the healthcare team.



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Full details of this project can be found at [msd-uk.com/partnerships/collaborative-working](https://www.msd-uk.com/partnerships/collaborative-working)

This link will take you to an MSD website.

*This project was a shared contribution of time between Lancashire Teaching Hospital Trust, Lancashire & South Cumbria Cancer Alliance and MSD.

[†]This target is in-line with KPIs published by the RCPATH.

[‡]Reporting of diagnosis of urology tumours within 10 days increased from 44% in March 2024 to 88% in October 2024. In the skin pathway, reporting of diagnosis within 10 days decreased from 55% in March 2024 to 45% in October 2024.

[§]Which may or may not have included MSD medicines.[‡]

Abbreviations: KPI, key performance indicator; NHS, National Health Service; NICE, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; RCPATH, Royal College of Pathologists.

References: 1. MSD. Collaborative working. Available at: www.msd-uk.com/partnerships/collaborative-working/. Accessed: November 2025.