

WHAT IS THE CDS TOOL?

The Cancer Decision Support tool is an electronic tool which runs alongside a GP system and is designed to be an aid to clinical decision making, to support GPs in their decisions about whether to refer or request further diagnostic investigation, in patients where they believe there is a risk of cancer. The tool displays the risk of a patient having a specific type of cancer, based on information pulled from their patient record including symptoms, medical history and demographic data. It has three main functions; prompts, a symptom checker and a population risk stratification tool.

To find out more, watch a short video about the tool on our [website](#), or alternatively, take a look at our Frequently Asked Questions document which has more information about the tool and its development.

HOW DID IT START?

In 2013 we worked in partnership with BMJ Informatica, the Department of Health and Cancer Research UK to develop the electronic Cancer Decision Support Tool - designed to help GPs in their clinical decision making when referring for suspected cancer. We successfully piloted the tool with over 550 GP practices across the UK.

The aim of the pilot was to ascertain whether the tool would be useful and easy to incorporate into a 10 minute consultation, as well as raise awareness of cancer risk among GPs to get them to 'think cancer' whilst helping support them to make decisions in 'low risk but not no risk' consultation cases.

In 2014 we were nominated for a HSJ award in the 'Innovation and Value in Information Technology' category. We faced stiff competition from acute trusts across the country, but were delighted to win the award.

This incredible achievement is due to all the hard work and support of people all across the country and our hope is that this endorsement will help to increase the number of GPs using the tool, ultimately contributing to the earlier referral and diagnosis of cancer.



WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Following this successful pilot, we are now in the next phase of our work to implement the tool across the UK - working with the three main IT providers, Emis, Vision INPS and TPP SystemOne to develop integrated versions of the tool within their systems.



Email preventionanddiagnosis@macmillan.org.uk to join the mailing list and be notified when the integrated version of the tool is available on your system

IS THE TOOL AVAILABLE NOW?

While we are working on an integrated version of the tool, it is still possible for TPP SystemOne users to download the tool for free via BMJ Informatica. Additionally, BMJ Informatica customers can also download the tool for free. EMIS users can access the symptom checker function of the tool now with full rollout expected in Summer 2015. Vision will be piloting in Scotland during summer 2015.



Email preventionanddiagnosis@macmillan.org.uk to start the simple, step-by-step download process.

CURRENT EVALUATION FINDINGS

- At the end of 2014, CRUK published their evaluation for the pilot. They discovered:
- 46% of the time, the risk calculated by the tool was different from the GPs perceived level of risk
 - A fifth of all patients for whom we have evaluation data were referred for suspected cancer; nearly a quarter (23%) were intended for investigation; no action was taken for 47%
 - Of patients referred or intended for investigation GPs reported that in around 20% of these cases they would have taken no action without the software
 - The tool was welcomed due to raising awareness of cancer symptoms, and reminding and alerting GPs to 'think cancer'.
 - The tool was useful in group practices where different GPs see the patient.

Read the full executive summary of the evaluation by downloading it from our [website](#).

The Clinical Reference Group for the project is currently deciding on the commissioning of a further evaluation of the CDS tool. The initial pilot evaluation was interested in whether the tool was useful for GPs, but moving forward we would like to understand if and how the tool has made a difference to earlier diagnosis of cancer.

CONTACT US

To find out more about our work with Cancer Decision Support Tools, or the role of our Prevention & Diagnosis programme at Macmillan – please get in touch at preventionanddiagnosis@macmillan.org.uk.