

## **Breast Cancer Treatment Protocols for Women Under 35**

### **1. Current Situation**

Mechanisms do exist for patients under 35 to be referred urgently to Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust although there is a slight difference to the usual 2 week rule process.

Rather than utilising the urgent open access referral route to Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, GPs are asked to ring the Breast Unit and speak to one of the consultants to discuss the case. If the consultant agrees, the patient is then treated as an urgent referral and given an appointment under the two week rule. In the vast majority of cases these women are seen as two week rules.

Following referral, the protocols for treatment for women under 35 are the same as those over 35.

NHS Bolton expects that GPs will refer women under 35 as urgent referrals where there are clear indications of cancer.

The current waiting time for a non urgent outpatient appointment to see abreast surgeon is 4 to 6 weeks.

### **2. Future Changes**

As part of the Cancer Reform Strategy, new targets have been set to ensure the delivery of better treatment. One of these new targets is that all patients referred to a specialist with breast symptoms, even if cancer is not suspected, should be seen within two weeks of referral. It is expected that this target will be fully implemented by December 2009.

NHS Bolton is working with Royal Bolton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust on the early implementation of this target.

Dawn Moody  
Associate Director of Commissioning  
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