Patient Information Sheet

# The Rapid Diagnostic Service

**What is this Service?**

**Many patients visit their GP with “vague” symptoms such as weight loss and tiredness. These symptoms are called “non-specific” as they affect the whole person. Often the cause of these symptoms remains unclear even after your GP has assessed you and, undertaken tests. These “non-specific” symptoms may sometimes be caused by a serious disease, sometimes cancer, but the risk of this is very low.**

**As the cause of these symptoms is difficult to diagnose, and although the risk of serious disease is low, there are some patients for whom referral for a CT (computerized tomography) scan could diagnose the cause more quickly allowing treatment to be started sooner.**

**What is a CT Scan?**

**A computerised tomography (CT) scan uses X-rays and a computer to create detailed images of the inside of your body. They're carried out in hospital by specially trained operators called radiographers, and can be done during a short visit to your local hospital.**

**CT scans are used to diagnose conditions and produce detailed images of structures inside the body, including the internal organs, blood vessels and bones.**

**What happens next?**

**Your GP will send the hospital information about your condition including your symptoms, examination findings, medical history and recent test results.**

**You will then be contacted by the hospital who will ask you to attend an appointment within 2 weeks of the referral. Please make sure you can be available for this appointment.**

**Your appointment at the hospital**

**Your appointment will be for a CT scan of your neck, chest, abdomen and pelvis. Instructions will be sent to you from the hospital detailing where this is, how long the appointment will last and any specific instructions to follow before you attend.**

**Your test results and clinical information will then be assessed by the Rapid Diagnostic Service. If a specific diagnosis is found such as a serious medical condition or cancer, then the Rapid Diagnosis Service will contact you and they may refer you onto a specialist pathway. If no further evaluation is needed in the hospital then the service will tell you, and write to your GP with any information and treatment suggestions.**