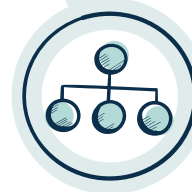


Supporting resource

Data governance to facilitate effective IPN management



Robust data management processes help track patients throughout the care pathway; reduce the risk of people being 'lost' to follow-up; and support timely, guideline-concordant care. Effective data management also helps evaluate programme performance, identify gaps in care, inform service improvements and support long-term planning. Establishing clear processes for data collection, storage, monitoring and reporting helps ensure the effectiveness of an IPN programme.

Data collected in an IPN programme should support effective triage and clinical decision-making, monitor patient management and outcomes, and evaluate programme performance. This includes information on referral pathways, patient and nodule characteristics, multidisciplinary team (MDT) decision-making, investigations, follow-up activities and service performance metrics. Examples of data that can be collected are outlined below.

Data category	Data points
Referral	Referral source (e.g. primary care, secondary care, self-referral, emergency department) and information captured in the referral form. ¹
Clinical and nodule	Clinical information, patient history, nodule size, nodule type, changes in size or appearance and malignancy risk assessment. ¹
Pathway and MDT	Triage decisions, MDT discussions, recommendations, discharge decisions, surveillance plans and referrals for further testing. ¹
Investigation and outcome	CT surveillance, PET-CT investigations, biopsy results (where conducted) and transfer to lung cancer services. ¹
Service performance	Number of referrals, adherence to guideline recommendations, average time to receive care, number of discharges. ²

The table below outlines data management considerations for IPN programmes and examples of how these approaches have been used in practice.

Data governance component	Considerations
Collecting high-quality data to facilitate programme monitoring	Programmes should use digital databases or registries to systematically record patient and programme data, enabling monitoring of programme efficiency and identification of bottlenecks. ³
Tracking patients and monitoring follow-up	Systematic monitoring of IPNs and follow-up activities helps programmes assess performance, identify gaps in care, and support continuous quality improvement. ⁴
Ensuing accountability and programme oversight	Nodule registries and tracking systems provide a central source of information for monitoring programme activity and patient outcomes. ⁴⁻⁶ Their effectiveness depends on clear ownership, the regular review of collected data, and processes to act on identified gaps or areas for improvement.
Monitoring, evaluation and reporting	Programmes should routinely collect and report data on referrals, scans, follow-up activities, outcomes and performance indicators. Regular monitoring helps identify gaps in care, evaluate programme effectiveness and inform service improvement. ⁶

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