

When to refer

All patients with a suspected head & neck must see a specialist within two weeks of their GP deciding that they need to be seen urgently.

The level of suspicion is further increased if the patient is a heavy smoker or heavy alcohol drinker and is aged over 45 years and male.

Other forms of tobacco use (chewing Betel, Gutkha, Pan) should also arouse suspicion.

Urgent out-patient referral [liaise with specialist and copy to CAS]

- Hoarseness persisting for more than 6 weeks.
- Ulceration of oral mucosa persisting for more than 3 weeks.
- Oral swellings persisting for more than 3 weeks.
- All red or red and white patches of the oral mucosa.
- Dysphagia persisting for 3 weeks.
- Unilateral nasal obstruction particularly when associated with purulent discharge.
- Unexplained tooth mobility not associated with periodontal disease.
- Unresolving neck masses for more than 3 weeks.
- Cranial neuropathies.
- Orbital masses.

Refer to RARC

- if the patient does not meet the referral criteria above consider referral to CAS requesting a RARC appointment.