Appendix B: Care Pathway I – Patients with Signs and Symptoms of Suspected Prostate Cancer

Asymptomatic patients presenting with PSA elevated above age-adjusted reference range

- Consider DRE after discussion of harms and benefits

Patients with LUTS (Voiding symptoms: poor stream, hesitancy, urgency, frequency, intermittent flow, and straining to pass urine)

- Signs/symptoms of acute prostatitis? (e.g., dysuria, hematuria, pelvic/groin pain, fever/chills)
  - Yes
    - Antibiotics contraindicated and may be detrimental (e.g., biopsy infection, C. difficile, antibiotic resistance)
      - DRE for all patients.
      - PSA for all patients.
  - No
    - PSA not indicated prior to treatment.
      - Manage as clinically appropriate.
      - If symptoms resolve, discuss role of DRE/PSA as per asymptomatic patients.
      - If symptoms do not resolve, refer as clinically appropriate.

- PSA elevated above age-adjusted reference range?
  - Yes
    - Consider other causes of elevated PSA. Repeat PSA at 4-12 weeks.
  - No
    - Prostate hard or irregular on DRE?
      - Yes
        - Repeat PSA above age-adjusted* reference range?
          - Yes
            - Refer to urology.
          - No
            - Other Causes of Elevated PSA
              - Urinary retention
              - Prostatitis
              - Benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH)
              - Bladder catheterization/instrumentation
              - PSA levels are not significantly altered after cycling, intercourse, or digital rectal exam.
              - Note: For men taking 5-alpha reductase inhibitors (i.e., finasteride & dutasteride), PSA will drop by approximately 50%. For accurate interpretation relative to lab-reported aged-based ranges, adjust the reported result by a factor of 2.
              - Abbreviations: BPH - benign prostatic hyperplasia; DRE - digital rectal exam; PSA - prostate specific antigen.
      - No
        - Repeat PSA/DRE in less than 2 years is not indicated.

- When DRE and PSA are normal, prostate cancer is unlikely. Evaluate for other causes and treat as appropriate. Repeat PSA/DRE in less than 2 years is not indicated.