Appendix C: Care Pathway II – Patients with Possible Symptoms of Metastatic Prostate Cancer

Patients with **otherwise unexplained**:
- lower back pain
- bone pain
- weight loss, especially in the elderly
Consider the investigation of prostate cancer as part of your work-up.

**Focal neurologic symptoms or spinal compression?**

- **Yes**
  - Refer to Emergency Room.
- **No**
  - **DRE hard or irregular, or PSA above age-based* reference range?**
    - **No**
      - Prostate cancer is unlikely. Consider other metastatic cancers.
    - **Yes**
      - Refer to urology.

**Age-based PSA Reference Ranges:**
- 0-49 yrs  0-2.50 μg/L
- 50-59 yrs  0-3.50 μg/L
- 60-69 yrs  0-4.50 μg/L
- ≥70 yrs    0-6.50 μg/L

**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.