Malignancy of Undefined Primary Origin (MUO)

The patient has basic tests which show the possibility of a cancer which has spread (e.g. blood tests, chest X-ray, CT scan). It is not clear where the primary site of the cancer is (the place in the body where the disease started). The patient is referred to hospital for investigation

The patient has more tests which may be guided by symptoms. For most patients a sample of the tumour (biopsy) is obtained at this stage. The patient receives supportive care to manage symptoms and this continues through the cancer pathway

The primary cancer is identified

The patient is found *not* to have cancer

The patient is referred to a team specialising in treatment for that cancer type

Provisional Cancer of Unknown Primary (pCUP)

More information from the tests helps the hospital team refine the diagnosis but the primary site is not identified.

Detailed review of the information and further tests requested by the hospital's multi-disciplinary Cancer of Unknown Primary (CUP) team

From the evidence available, the CUP team recommends that the patient should be treated in the same way as a known type of primary cancer

Confirmed Cancer of Unknown Primary (cCUP)

The primary site of the cancer still cannot be found.

Patient continues to receive anti-cancer treatment under the care of the CUP team

Patient receives supportive care but no anti-cancer treatment.