



ALK Positive Lung Cancer (UK)

Second Opinions

NHS and private patients can ask for a free second opinion and they can also pay for one privately. Although no-one is legally entitled to a second opinion, they are rarely refused.

At one of our Patient Forums, a Consultant was asked about second opinions and he said that he was happy for his patients to seek a second opinion but he hoped that this would be from someone whose opinion he would respect.

There may be various reasons for seeking a second opinion but often it is when a patient wishes to consult an ALK+ expert as to whether there could be another approach to their treatment.

CRUK have useful guidance on obtaining a second opinion at

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-in-general/treatment/access-to-treatment/different-doctor-second-opinion>

Where to start

Be clear as to why you are thinking about seeking a second opinion. It will be helpful if you have identified a consultant who you wish to provide the second opinion. You can ask your current consultant to arrange for the second opinion or you can ask your GP to make the arrangements.

What help we can offer

The Charity will support people who wish to have a second opinion. Please contact us if you would like to discuss this and consider a Centre of Excellence closest to where you live.

Whilst an NHS second opinion is free to patients, travelling costs for two people may be a deterrent for some. We will, therefore, where there is financial hardship, pay all travelling costs for a patient and companion to attend for a second opinion.

What help the USA-based ALK Positive Inc can offer

The USA-based Group operates a second opinion programme which is available to all their members world-wide. Many of our members are also members of this group. The USA group have a panel of ALK+ experts who will provide second opinions but patients would have to ascertain which of the panel will do so remotely. The cost would be about £800. This cost will be paid by the USA group if a patient cannot afford to pay or couldn't raise the money.

Patients need to be aware that the UK and the USA have very different health systems and a treatment that might be recommended by a USA consultant might not be available in the UK, either on the NHS or privately. Nevertheless, we are aware of a small number of UK patients who have felt it worth themselves paying for a second opinion.