Further to your request for information dated 28 January 2016 the information requested is below:

1. Because Choose and Book now e-Referral Service is automated self-service booking service where the patient is using internet to book into any hospital they want for their first consultation appointment, is there any patient illness information that the GP gives to hospital consultant by sending a letter or fax (manually method) after the Choose and Book now e-Referral Service is made? Or does the GP give patient illness information / has to give patient illness information by default at the very start (automatic method) when the GP is offering Choose and Book now e-Referral Service to the patient?

The E-Referrals service allows GPs to attach a letter to the referral so that the hospital consultant has access to all necessary clinical information and details of the patient’s presenting condition. The appointment at the chosen hospital is either made by the GP in discussion with the patient or the patient is given a letter with a unique booking reference and password so that they can go onto the system and book the appointment themselves.

2. Are there particular lead times for serious illnesses which require urgent referral appointments to be made by the hospital who will be seeing the patient, conditions such as cancer etc and does the Choose and Book now e-Referral Service cater for this?

For conditions such as cancer there are defined pathways that require hospitals to see a patient for their first outpatient appointment within two weeks. In these instances, the e-Referrals system is not used; there are defined referral pro-formas that should be used to make these urgent referrals.