Most children referred via the 2 week wait pathway do not turn out to have cancer but we did have one this year—a lump in the nose that turned out to be a rhabdomyosarcoma. Mr Sunil Sharma explains why ENT need to be involved with lumps and bumps in children, concentrating mainly on neck lumps.

- Paediatric cervical lymphadenopathy is common, usually only requiring parental reassurance and monitoring
- Ultrasound is the most useful first-line imaging modality for paediatric neck masses not thought to be benign
- Any paediatric cervical lymph nodes that are large (>2cm), persistent, supraclavicular in site, associated with any suspicious features on ultrasound, or any suspicious features on history and examination, should be referred to ENT for consideration of excision biopsy
- Malignancy is very rare in the paediatric population, but can include lymphoma and rhabdomyosarcoma (the most common paediatric soft tissue malignancy)
- Atypical mycobacterial (non-tuberculous mycobacterial) disease can present with slowly enlarging non-tender, indurated neck masses with purplish skin discoloration, not responding to anti-TB meds, and may need surgical treatment
- Midline neck masses include thyroglossal and dermoid cysts. If large or causing recurrent infections, should be excised
- Sinuses around the mandible (1st branchial arch), or at the anterior border of the sternocleidomastoid muscle (2nd branchial arch), or recurrent acute thyroid abscesses (4th branchial arch) should be referred to ENT for consideration of surgical excision of branchial anomalies. May be associated with a genetic anomaly (e.g. Branchio-Oto-Renal syndrome)


- During 2014-15, ChildLine counselled 276,956 children and supported a further 9,856 who had serious concerns about another child.
- The ChildLine website received over 3.2 million visits – 5% more than in 2013-14.
- The top 3 concerns counselled were family relationships, low self-esteem/unhappiness and abuse.
- 4 of the top 10 issues related to mental health. These issues were self-harm, suicide, low self-esteem/unhappiness and mental health conditions, Together they accounted for almost one third of total concerns.
- There were 29,126 counselling sessions about abuse in 2014-15

Since 2014:
- The number of counselling sessions about low self-esteem/unhappiness increased by 9%.
- Sexual abuse (including online sexual abuse) increased by 8% from 2013-14.
- Domestic/partner abuse saw an increase of 4% from 2013-14.
- There was a 124% increase in the number of counselling sessions where young people talked about problems accessing services.
- Online counselling continued to grow, rising from 68% in 2013-14, to 71% in 2014-15.

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Public Health England in Surrey and Sussex has sent out a warning about a particularly virulent strain of meningococcus (ST-11 Men W) which is affecting teenagers and young adults in the south east of UK currently. Presentation is atypical – septic arthritis, epiglottitis, GI symptoms. 14-18 year olds are being vaccinated with MenACWY. The Men B vaccine, Bexsero, covers this strain too so babies will not need revaccination. Leaflet aimed at 13-18 year olds available here. 