



Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

Issue 118: 24 July 2025

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Help us improve our website

We're redesigning [our website](#) and we'd love your input. Our short survey is open now and will only take a few minutes to complete. It will help us create a site that's easier for you to use and navigate.

[Complete survey here](#)

Closes Friday 8 August



**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

Reminder: Macmillan welfare rights support for patients

The Macmillan Specialist Welfare Rights team provides practical advice and support for patients through the Macmillan Support Line (Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm, excluding public holidays).

They can help with:

- Full benefits checks
- Questions about entitlements and how to apply
- Support with form filling and applications
- Challenging benefit decisions
- Signposting to local support
- Accessing grants from other organisations

Or they can be signposted to the Macmillan Support

Line: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/get-help/macmillan-support-line>

Get in touch and Find Out More button: [Cancer support services for your patients | Macmillan Cancer Support](#)

National news

Junior Doctors Strike – 25 to 30 July

The British Medical Association (BMA) has confirmed that junior doctors (resident doctors) will take part in strike action from **7am on Friday 25 July until 7am on Wednesday 30 July**.

- All other NHS staff, including consultants and specialist doctors, will continue to work as normal during this period.
- The focus across the NHS will be on maintaining safe patient care and ensuring essential services remain operational.
- We are working closely with trade unions to assess and address any patient safety concerns and ensure that emergency care remains safely staffed.

Key points for staff:

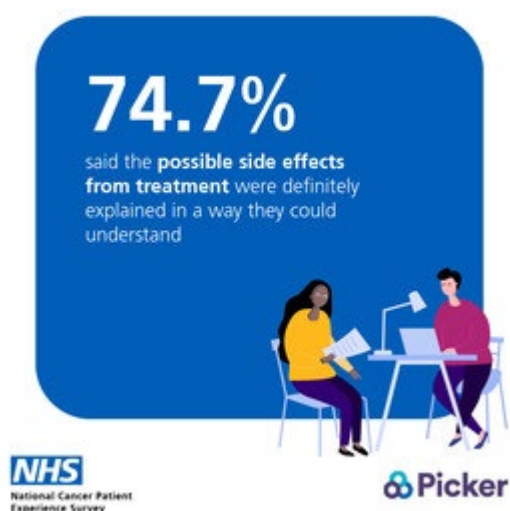
- Patients in need of urgent or life-threatening care should continue to be seen as normal. Please support in reassuring patients that they should still seek help when it's needed.
- Disruption to routine appointments is expected, but cancellations will only occur where absolutely necessary.

- If a patient has not been contacted by us, they should attend their appointment as planned. If changes are required, they will be contacted directly.

Staff across all services are asked to remain vigilant, support colleagues, and help communicate clearly and compassionately with patients during this period of disruption.

For further information, please [read the system preparedness letter](#).

National cancer patient experience survey 2024 – results now available



The results of the 2024 National Cancer Patient Experience Survey (NCPES) were published on Thursday 17 July. The survey, carried out annually since 2010, provides valuable insight into the experiences of people receiving cancer care in England.

The results are now available on the [National Cancer Patient Experience Survey website here](#)

A [infographic](#) and [template infographic](#) for you to use is also available.

NHS England will host a webinar on the national results of the 2024 survey on Tuesday 12 August from 10am to 12.30pm via Microsoft Teams. To attend, you'll need to create an account and register in advance. Further details and booking information are available [online here](#).

If you have any questions about the results or the webinar, please contact england.insight-queries@nhs.net.

Cancer performance insights dashboard – version 2 now available

Version 2 of the Cancer Performance Insights Dashboard is now live. This updated version includes new features such as Cancer Alliance aggregations, reporting on the 31-day and 62-day standards by treatment modality, and other functionality improvements.

The dashboard remains in development, and feedback is welcome. If you have suggestions or comments, please contact england.cait@nhs.net.

HPV vaccination catch-up campaign 2025/26 – confirmation and next steps

NHS England has confirmed the 2025/26 national HPV vaccination and immunisation catch-up campaign. A letter has been issued to ICBs, primary care, and public health teams outlining the campaign timeline, funding arrangements, and vaccine ordering process.

Read the full update: [Confirmation of national HPV vaccination and immunisation catch-up campaign](#)

Plato trial: personalising treatment for anal cancer

The PLATO trial investigated whether a lower dose of chemoradiotherapy could be as effective as the standard dose for treating early-stage squamous cell anal cancer, while reducing side effects.

Until now, treatment for anal cancer has taken a one-size-fits-all approach. This study compared:

- Standard dose chemoradiotherapy (28 sessions over 5.5 weeks)
- Lower dose chemoradiotherapy (23 sessions over 4.5 weeks)

All participants received mitomycin C and capecitabine alongside radiotherapy.

Key findings:

- Lower dose treatment was as effective at curing cancer
- It caused fewer severe side effects
- Most participants' quality of life returned to normal within 6 months
- Pain, tiredness, and bowel issues were the most common side effects
- Sexual health was more affected in the standard treatment group

Next steps:

Patients in the trial continue with follow-up assessments. Further results will evaluate long-term effects and treatment outcomes.

Find out more: [Click here for trial details](#) | [Full summary](#)

Jewish BRAC testing – register by 31 October 2025

The NHS Jewish BRCA Testing Programme is a free, national initiative offering genetic testing to people of Jewish ancestry, who are at much higher risk of carrying a BRCA gene fault linked to breast, ovarian, prostate, and pancreatic cancers.

Ashkenazi Jewish individuals have a 1 in 40 chance of carrying the gene fault, which can significantly increase lifetime cancer risk. Those who test positive are referred for high-risk screening and prevention support.

Registrations close 31 October 2025, so early action is vital.

Find out more: [BRAC testing for the Jewish community](#)

Register directly at: www.jewishbrca.org

Or call the J BRCA helpline: **020 3437 6001** (Mon–Fri, 9am–5pm, Wed to 7pm)



World Head and Neck Day - Sunday 27 July

Neck lumps are a common presentation across all age groups and are often caused by benign conditions such as viral infections. However, recognising when to investigate further is critical.

[Read tips on assessing here](#) - This guidance supports primary care professionals in assessing neck lumps by reviewing key risk factors, associated symptoms, and when to be concerned. It also highlights the importance of considering age, onset, and location as part of a thorough clinical assessment.

Alliance updates

Genomics Education Day: 13 October



Join Thames Valley Cancer Alliance and Macmillan Cancer Support for a day of engaging and accessible sessions led by experts in the field of cancer genomics — ideal for beginners or anyone looking for a refresher.

- **When:** Monday 13 October 2025, 9am-4.30pm. Tickets are free and lunch is included.
- **Where:** Reading Town Hall, Blagrove Street, Reading, RG1 1QH

Topics covered include:

- What is Genomics?
- Genomics in Oncology Treatment Planning
- Inherited Cancer Risk & Germline Testing
- Future Developments in Genomics
- Mainstreaming Germline Testing in Routine Practice

Who should attend? Cancer nurse specialists, oncology nurses, support workers, medical staff (all levels), pharmacists, admin teams, service managers — and anyone curious about the growing role of genomics in cancer care.

Book your place by 29 September! Places are limited so book now to secure your ticket.

Visit: [Genomics education day - thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk](https://genomicseducationday-thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk) to view more and book your spot, or go directly to: [Genomics Education Day Tickets | Eventbrite](#)

Training and events

JULY IS SARCOMA AWARENESS MONTH

Signs and symptoms of childhood sarcomas

Recognising the signs early is crucial for timely diagnosis and treatment. Raising awareness among professionals, families, and caregivers can help improve outcomes for children affected by these rare cancers.



[More info and learning here](#)

Key takeaways:

- Rhabdomyosarcoma (RMS) is the most common soft tissue sarcoma in children.
- Osteosarcoma is the most common bone sarcoma, followed by Ewing sarcoma.



Assessing soft tissue and bony lumps – when to be concerned

Sarcoma is often diagnosed late, with **1 in 3 patients** receiving a diagnosis more than six months after first seeing a healthcare professional.

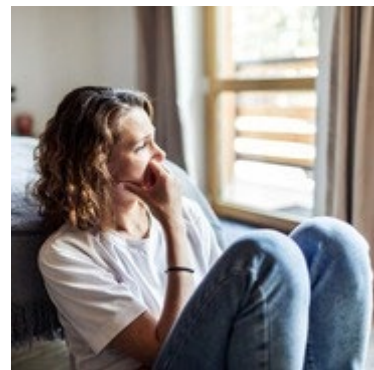
This **Cancer Key** outlines the essential points for **primary care clinicians** to consider when assessing soft tissue or bony lumps—helping to support earlier

recognition and referral.

[Read more here](#)

GP reflection: sarcoma awareness – why a ‘three strikes and you’re in’ approach can help

This real-life case study highlights how diagnostic delays in sarcoma can arise from multiple factors across both primary and secondary care. It offers valuable **reflective learning for GPs**, emphasising the importance of persistence and follow-up—especially when patients present multiple times with unexplained symptoms.



[More info here](#)

Watch on-demand: Alcohol and cancer – what health professionals need to know

As part of **Cancer Prevention Action Week**, World Cancer Research Fund hosted a webinar for health professionals exploring the evidence on alcohol and cancer risk.

What the webinar covers:

- The evidence behind World Cancer Research Fund’s Cancer Prevention Recommendations
- The science linking alcohol and cancer risk
- Debunking common myths and influencing public behaviour

- The evolving political landscape for change in the UK

Watch the webinar [on-demand here](#) and receive a **CPD certificate**.

Weight, cancer & prevention: What the evidence tells us

The summer issue of 'Informed!' looks at the link between body weight and cancer risk, the factors that influence weight, and how health professionals can support patients in reaching a healthy weight. It also examines the role of Body Mass Index (BMI) in weight management and highlights our **Eat Move Learn** programme, which helps children build lifelong healthy habits.

Read the latest issue here: [INFORMED 92 NEWSLETTER WEB.pdf](#)

Application form – genomics for primary care (face-to-face course)

Use this form to apply for the 1-day face-to-face Genomics for Primary Care course, jointly delivered by Central and South GMSA and the West Midlands Cancer Alliance.

Who it's for: GPs, Nurses, and AHPs working in primary care

Date & time: 9am – 5pm (exact date TBC)

Location: University of Birmingham Medical School

Course content includes:

- Fundamentals of genomics and inheritance patterns
- Identifying and testing for cancer predisposition syndromes (e.g. Lynch, BRCA1/2)
- Managing cancer gene carriers in primary care
- Recognising common but underdiagnosed genomic conditions (e.g. FH, HH)
- Carrier testing and family planning

Important:

Please only apply if you can attend in person. Places will be allocated by the end of September and confirmed by email.

Questions? Contact: vicki.geddes@uhb.nhs.uk

Diagnosing breast cancer in Black women – e-learning now available

A new e-learning course, Diagnosing breast cancer in Black women, is available on the [NHS Learning Hub](#). The course explores:

- Specific risk factors affecting Black women
- Barriers to timely diagnosis
- Lived experiences during the diagnostic journey

This module aims to support healthcare professionals in recognising and addressing disparities in breast cancer diagnosis.

Additional e-learning courses on reducing healthcare inequalities in sickle cell disease and the Core20PLUS5 approach are also available on the [NHS Learning Hub](#).

A brisk walking lowers risk of five cancer types

New research funded by World Cancer Research Fund shows that **brisk walking** is linked to a reduced risk of five cancers:

- Bowel
- Liver (hepatocellular carcinoma)
- Small intestine
- Thyroid
- Lung

Using UK Biobank data, researchers studied walking pace in relation to 28 cancer types. Even after adjusting for overall activity and walking time, **brisk walking** stood out as a protective factor for these five cancers.

Read more on the study here: [Brisk walking lowers the risk of 5 cancers | World Cancer Research Fund](#)

Reminder: Cancer MDT Improvement Programme

The NHSE Cancer Improvement Programme Team is inviting expressions of interest for cohort 2 of the Cancer MDT improvement programme, launching in October 2025.

Following a successful pilot earlier this year, the programme supports MDTs to improve how their meetings operate to deliver better outcomes for patients.

Support includes:

- 1:1 coaching from NHS England
- Virtual learning sessions with expert and peer presenters
- Action learning sets
- Guidance on quality improvement methodology

Deadline: Thursday 31 July (close of play)

Further information and how to apply is available [in this flyer](#).

Please share with colleagues. One MDT per Trust may apply, and sharing of learning is strongly encouraged.

Reminder: Expressions of interest open for Cancer Improvement Collaborative (CIC) 7 – Improving experience of cancer care together

Expressions of interest are now open for CIC 7, part of the NHS Cancer Programme, which focuses on improving the experience of cancer care with and for people affected by cancer, their families and unpaid carers.

The programme provides a quality improvement and coaching framework to support systems in making person-centred improvements to cancer care delivery.

CIC 7 will run from September 2025 to May 2026 and will be delivered using a hybrid model. This includes online content and two face-to-face sessions:

- Launch: 24 September 2025
- Celebration: May 2026

The deadline for expressions of interest is **12pm on Friday 8 August**.

Resources and a recording from the information session held on 26 June are available on the CIC FutureNHS platform.

For further information or to apply, please contact su.young@nhs.net.

NHS South East Region – Equality Impact Assessment training offer

The NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB Inclusion and Sustainability team, in collaboration with the NHS England South East Staff Experience, Engagement and

EDI team, is offering Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) training to support providers in embedding EIAs into change programmes.

About the training

The session supports the Inclusivity Through Change – South East approach and provides practical tools to help staff understand and complete EIAs effectively, with a focus on the Public Sector Equality Duty. The training is applicable to a range of changes, including workforce transformation and service redesign.

Who should attend

This training is aimed at NHS staff across the South East region, particularly:

- Those completing or supporting the completion of EIAs
 - Senior leaders involved in decision-making
- Open to all NHS healthcare settings in the region, including Trusts, Ambulance Services, Primary Care, and ICBs (not limited to Hampshire and Isle of Wight).

Upcoming training dates

- 5 August 2025, 1–2:30pm
- 20 August 2025, 2–3:30pm

To register, please use the NHS South East Region [Equality Impact Assessment training registration link](#).

For session queries contact ed.walton@nhs.net, for reasonable adjustments: contact england.se.staffexperience@nhs.net



Cancer demystified webinars

This training is suitable for all the workforce who support patients with cancer including CNS, SACT nurses, radiotherapy staff, GPs, ARRs, support workers, practice nurses and cancer administrators e.g. secretaries, booking staff, navigators and MDTC. The webinars are either 60, or 90, minutes duration, and you can choose to either join a live webinar or watch a recording.

To access the training, please follow these instructions:

- Click on this link to register for **live** webinars [Live Webinar Schedule](#)

- Click on this link to register for **recorded** webinars [Recorded Webinars](#)
- Then complete the quick and simple registration process
 1. name, email address, job role, organisation
 2. Proceed to payment page
 3. Type in the code **TVCA311222** as substitute for payment details
 4. You will receive confirmation of registration and details around access requirements.

Please do not share the code outside of TVCA as it will generate a cost for that individual.

Places on the Advanced Communication skills (for CNSs and aspiring CNSs) and Intermediate communications skills for any role providing navigation on a cancer pathway for patients **including primary care**) courses are filling up fast.

Upcoming webinars and dates:

- **ICST** 17 Sept, 4 places remaining ; 11 Mar, 3 places remaining
- **ACST** 2-3 Oct, 5 places remaining ; 13-14 Nov, 6 places remaining

Once you have completed a module, please provide [feedback using this form](#).

For more information or to view upcoming sessions visit: www.ohconsultancy.co.uk

Research study: supporting families at end of life

11 July – 30 November 2025

The Family-Centred Cancer Care team at Ulster University is conducting an NIHR-funded study on how to best support families living in deprivation when a parent with caregiving responsibilities is at end of life with cancer.

Health and social care professionals (any role or grade) are invited to take part in a 40-minute MS Teams interview to share their experiences.

To find out more or sign up, visit: [Online survey](#)

For questions, contact **Dr Jeff Hanna**: j.hanna@ulster.ac.uk

Research invitation: role of acps in cancer-associated thrombosis care

Hannah Felgate, MSc Advanced Clinical Practice student at the University of Surrey, is conducting research on professional stakeholders' views of the Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) role in caring for patients with cancer-associated thrombosis in secondary care.

She is inviting UKONS members to take part in a one-hour online interview via Microsoft Teams over the next few weeks. Interviews will be recorded for transcription and analysis.

If you're interested or would like more information, please contact **Hannah Felgate** at hf00463@surrey.ac.uk

Patient facing resources

Penicillin allergy: why it matters in cancer care

Many patients report a penicillin allergy, but in most cases, this is not a true allergy—and it can impact treatment options, including antibiotics used during cancer care.

We're sharing [this poster](#) designed to raise awareness among health professionals and patients about the importance of reviewing reported penicillin allergies.

Please display and share the poster across your teams to support safer, more effective care for people with cancer.

Like and follow us on our social media channels:

[Facebook](#)

[BlueSky](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Nextdoor](#)

[YouTube](#)



Thames Valley
Cancer Alliance



**Training
and events**



**Campaign
materials**



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