



# Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

## **Issue 130: 27 February 2026**

Alongside a look back at news in February, we focus on what's coming up in March across the Thames Valley and nationally.

Your feedback and articles are very welcome: [bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net](mailto:bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net)

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## **February recap**

### **National February highlights**

## National Cancer Plan



Published in February 2026, the National Cancer Plan for England outlines a bold, long-term approach to delivering world-class cancer care, with a focus on earlier diagnosis, improved performance and reducing inequalities across pathways. The plan's headline ambition is for 75% of people diagnosed with cancer to be living well five years after diagnosis by 2035.

Find out more: [National Cancer Plan for England - GOV.UK](#)

### NHS Breast Screening Programme update

[Latest data for 2024/25](#) shows an increase in breast cancers detected through the NHS Breast Screening Programme, with screening uptake at first invitation reaching a 10-year high.

Alongside this, NHS England has published [Breast Screening: Tackling the uptake challenge](#) – a review of progress and next steps, highlighting work to improve access and engagement and outlining future actions to further increase screening uptake.

### Breast screening uptake reaches 10-year high

The number of women attending their first mammogram has reached a 10-year high, leading to thousands more cancers being detected through screening.

Earlier diagnosis means more treatment options are available and improves the likelihood of effective treatment and outcomes. More : [Women attending first mammogram hits 10-year high](#)

### Robotic surgery milestone for bowel cancer care

A bowel cancer patient has become the first to undergo surgery using a new multi-million-pound robotic system at Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital in Margate. The robot enables surgeons to carry out precise minimally invasive procedures, supporting faster recovery and improved outcomes for

patients. Read article in The Independent here: [Bowel cancer patient is first to have life-saving surgery by hospital's new robot](#)

### **NHS Retrospective genetic testing programme**

The NHS Retrospective Genetic Testing Programme pilot ran from May to August 2025, offering germline testing to patients diagnosed with eligible breast or ovarian cancer between 2015 and 2018 who had not previously received testing. Following successful delivery of the pilot, the programme is now moving to full rollout.

The End of Pilot Report, produced by the Institute of Cancer Research, is [available here](#) for further information.

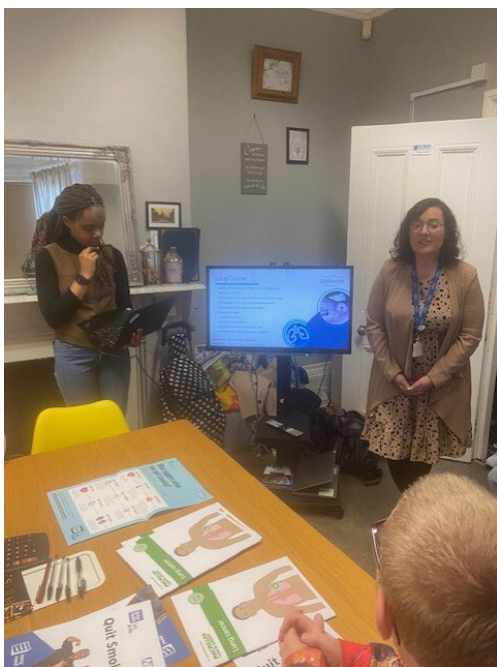
### **Living With and Beyond Cancer (LWBC) planning support**

The NHS Cancer Programme has released updated LWBC planning support for 2026/27, bringing together key priorities, requirements, and resources to help Cancer Alliances deliver personalised care and improve quality of life for people affected by cancer.

Colleagues involved in LWBC and survivorship work are encouraged to review the slideset to support local planning and preparation for the year ahead. [View slide deck here](#)

### **TVCA February highlight**

#### **Lung Cancer Screening community engagement**



The Great Western Hospital Lung Cancer Screening team attended a Learning Disabilities community event on 4 February, delivering a session on lung health and raising awareness of the lung cancer screening programme.

The team is exploring further engagement opportunities, including plans for a dedicated screening day for the Learning Disabilities community, which is currently in early development.

We will keep you posted!

## Coming up in March

### Thames Valley news

#### Have your say on Mount Vernon Cancer Centre plans



**What do you think about travelling to Mount Vernon Cancer Centre?**

Your feedback will help us with future travel plans for local cancer services.

We want to hear from you whether you've used the service or not.

The survey closes on 1st May 2026 so please share your experiences and views with us by then.

Complete the survey online at:

[www.MVCCtravel.co.uk](http://www.MVCCtravel.co.uk) or scan here



NHS England is inviting feedback on the future of the [Mount Vernon Cancer Centre \(MVCC\)](#) which offers specialist treatment to several hundred Buckinghamshire residents each year. There are several online sessions for healthcare professionals to comment on the proposals.

For colleagues working in primary care and community and social care, sessions are on:

- Monday 2 March 12 midday – 1pm
- Tuesday 10 March 12 midday – 1pm

Please register using the online form at <https://re-url.uk/W79Q>

There is also a survey for clinicians and professionals, in addition to the main questionnaire, at <https://re-url.uk/W792> to be completed before the end of March 2026.

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## Training and events

### Supporting the NHS Educator Workforce

#### AHP Educator Career Framework:

The AHP Educator Career Framework sets out clear development pathways for Allied Health Professional educators across the NHS. It supports career progression, capability development and recognition of educator roles, helping

organisations build a sustainable educator workforce and strengthen education and training for future staff. See more: [Resource](#)

### **Educator Workforce Programme:**

The NHS Educator Workforce Programme supports delivery of the national Educator Workforce Strategy by valuing, developing and expanding the educator workforce across all professions and settings.

The programme highlights the vital role educators play in shaping the future NHS workforce and provides resources, tools and networks to support career development, protected time and recognition for educator roles. [View communications toolkit here](#)

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### **Managing uncertainty in Primary Care – Webinar**

NB Medical and Cancer Research UK will host a one-hour webinar on **Tuesday 10 March at 8pm** focusing on managing uncertainty and supporting timely cancer diagnosis in primary care. The session is worth 1 CPD credit.

Further details and registration are available here: [Managing Uncertainty in Primary Care Clinic](#)

### **Harnessing the benefits of physical activity**

The latest episode of [Harnessing the Benefits of Physical Activity](#) podcasts and blogs. The [Physical Activity to support people to prepare for and recover from illness](#) podcast features Zoe Merchant, Clinical Lead and Jack Murphy, Programme Manager for Prehab4Cancer

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## **Patient communications**

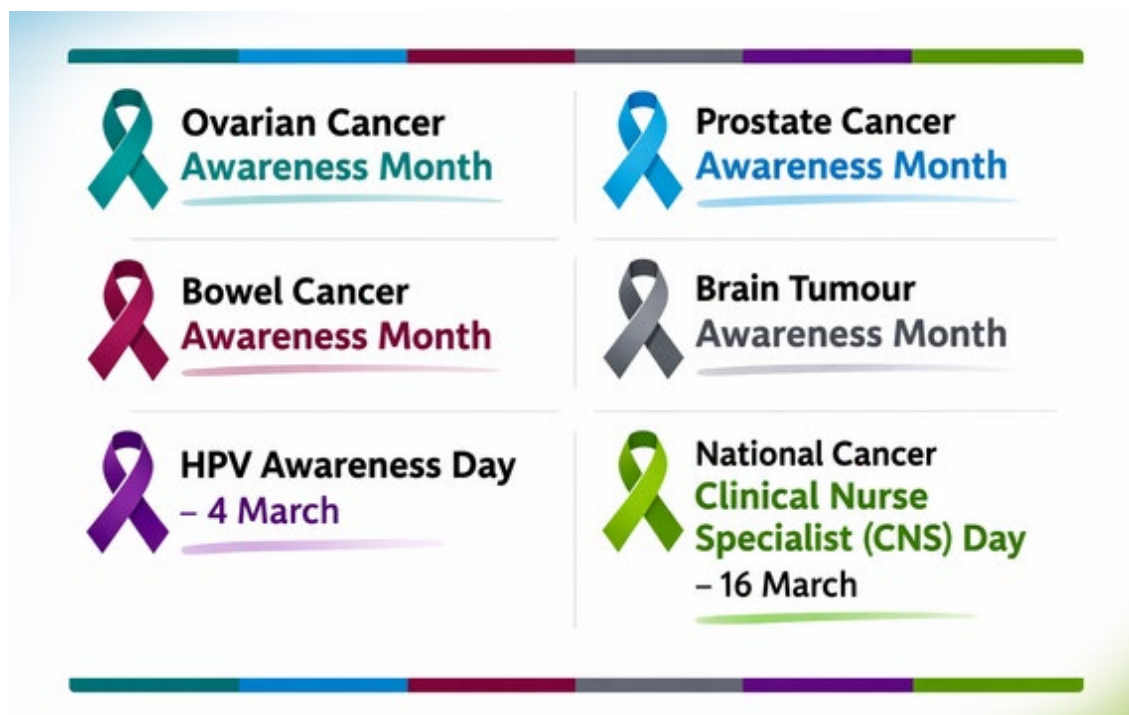
### **Young Adults Cancer Retreat – 28 March (Oxford)**

A free one-day retreat is being offered for people diagnosed with cancer in their 20s, 30s or 40s.

Taking place in Oxford on Saturday 28 March, the event will provide peer support, facilitated group sessions, and practical coping tools in a relaxed environment. Friends, partners and carers are welcome.

Please register in advance. [More details here.](#)

## Awareness days in March



- **HPV Awareness Day (4 March)** – Information on HPV vaccination and its role in cancer prevention. Visit: <https://www.thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk/our-work/prevention/hpv-vaccination/>
- **National Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) Day – 16 March:** Recognising the vital role of Cancer CNS teams in supporting patients throughout diagnosis, treatment and beyond. More information: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/about-us/health-professionals/cancer-clinical-nurse-specialists>
- **Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month** : A national campaign highlighting symptoms awareness, early diagnosis and support for those affected by ovarian cancer. Learn more: <https://ovarian.org.uk/get-involved/ovarian-cancer-awareness-month/>
- **Prostate Cancer Awareness Month** – March the Month: Encouraging people to get active and raise awareness of prostate cancer risk, testing

and support. Details: <https://prostatecanceruk.org/get-involved/march-the-month>

- **Bowel Cancer Awareness Month** : Focused on raising awareness of symptoms, screening and early diagnosis of colorectal cancer. Information and resources: <https://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/get-involved/bowel-cancer-awareness-month/>
- **Brain Tumour Awareness Month**: A month dedicated to increasing understanding of brain tumours and supporting research and patient advocacy. Find out more: <https://www.braintumourresearch.org/get-involved/brain-tumour-awareness-month>

### National No Smoking Day - 11 March

Smoking remains the largest preventable cause of cancer, responsible for about 1 in 4 cancer deaths in the UK.



Share our No Smoking Day messages with patients and colleagues before, on the day and afterwards to help people quit for good.

- More info here: [Quit smoking - Better Health - NHS](#)
- Download the [NHS Smokefree App](#)

[FaceBook](#)

[BlueSky](#)

[Instagram](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Nextdoor](#)

[YouTube](#)



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Cancer Alliance



If you have a TVCA Bulletin article you would like to share, just get in touch with us at: [bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net](mailto:bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net)

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