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Thames Valley
Cancer Alliance

Issue 130: 31 March 2026

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

Your feedback and articles are very welcome: bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net

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March recap

National highlights

Listening to Young Patients: Findings from the NHS 2024 Patient Experience Survey

Children and young people's experience of hospital care remains largely positive, particularly in relation to staff communication, kindness and involvement in decisions. However, the 2024 national qualitative report

highlights ongoing gaps in how well services respond to concerns, support vulnerable groups, and deliver personalised care.

Read more here: [NHS England » Children and young people's patient experience survey 2024: national qualitative report](#)

NHS 'Fit for the Future' population health model:

NHS England has set out new population health delivery models to support the shift towards prevention, community-based care and improved outcomes across local systems.

The approach focuses on integrated neighbourhood teams, greater use of data and digital tools, and more personalised, proactive care for defined populations.

More information: [NHS England » Fit for the future: towards population health delivery models](#)

Needle-free blood testing innovation

A new needle-free blood testing approach is being piloted in the NHS, improving access to diagnostics for patients unable to tolerate traditional venepuncture.

Read the story here: [Needle-free blood test is 'game changer' for patients](#)

Integrated psychological medicine in cancer care (OUH)

This video explores how psychological medicine is embedded within the Oxford University Hospitals cancer pathway, supporting patients from diagnosis through treatment and recovery.



It highlights the value of integrated working between clinical and psychological teams, the impact of diagnosis on patients, and how timely psychological support can improve treatment outcomes and reduce hospital admissions.

Watch the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lywftukZSA>

NHS Cervical Screening Programme: Digital Update

In 2025, the NHS introduced digital invitations, reminders, and some results via the NHS App.

All cervical screening results, including those requiring referral, will soon be available through the app. Patients with the NHS App will receive results there, while others will continue to receive letters by post.

Sample takers should inform patients of this change.

Additional [information and resources](#) (login required) to support adoption are available, with more coming soon.

Coming up in April

RSV Vaccination Programme: Update (2026)

From 1 April 2026, the RSV vaccination programme will expand to include all adults aged 80 and over and residents in care homes for older adults. More here: [Expansion of RSV vaccine eligibility to those aged 80 years and older and residents in care homes for older adults letter - GOV.UK](#)

GP practices must offer vaccination to eligible patients in line with updated contractual requirements, including accurate recording and patient call/recall.

Community pharmacies already delivering RSV vaccinations will also be able to vaccinate the expanded group, with contract updates to follow.

Consultation on expanding smoke-free and vape-free spaces

The government has launched a consultation on extending smoke-free legislation in England, including new restrictions on smoking, vaping and heated tobacco use in outdoor public and healthcare settings: [NHS England's Statement on information on health inequalities drop in session | NHS England Events](#)

Training and events

Genomics education and training events (Central and South Genomics)



A range of upcoming webinars, training sessions and events are available to support learning and development in genomics across the NHS.

Topics include cancer genomics, testing pathways and personalised care, with sessions suitable for a range of clinical and non-clinical roles.

More information and booking:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/nhscentralandsouthgenomics?sort=start>

GatewayC webinar: supporting earlier breast cancer diagnosis

GatewayC is hosting a free, CPD-accredited webinar on supporting earlier breast cancer diagnosis and managing mastalgia.

The session will cover common presentations of breast cancer, the role of family history, and safety-netting and referral advice for mastalgia, followed by a live Q&A.

Wednesday 22 April, 12.30–1.15pm. A recording will be available after the event.

More information: [NHSE webinar series: supporting earlier breast cancer diagnosis and managing mastalgia](#)

Bowel cancer and genomics: what healthcare professionals need to know

Join Central and South Genomics at a webinar on 28 April, 1pm – 3pm, to mark [Bowel Cancer Awareness Month](#).

Attendees will hear from a panel of experts on a range of topics including:

- the connection between genomics and bowel cancer
- the testing process
- emerging research findings
- Lynch Syndrome

Find more information and book your space [here](#).

Macmillan: neighbourhood health services and cancer care

Macmillan Cancer Support has published a long read exploring what a neighbourhood health service means in practice and how it can improve outcomes for people living with cancer.

Drawing on system insight, partnerships and lived experience, the piece highlights key enablers for delivering more personalised, community-based care and improving patient experience across the cancer pathway.

More information: [From rhetoric to reality: what is the neighbourhood health service? | Macmillan Cancer Support](#)

Harnessing the benefits of physical activity

Patient communications

Community Pharmacy Bank Holiday opening times

Easter Bank Holiday pharmacy opening times for the South East are now available, helping ensure continued access to medicines and advice during the holiday period.

More information: [NHS England — Pharmacy information](#)

Easter pharmacy map: [Pharmacies opening on Easter BH 2026 - Google My Maps](#)

Awareness days in April



- **Bowel Cancer Awareness Month:** Focused on raising awareness of symptoms, screening and early diagnosis of bowel cancer. Learn more: [Bowel Cancer | Bowel Cancer UK](#)
- **Testicular Cancer Awareness Month:** A campaign to increase awareness of testicular cancer, promote early detection and encourage men to check regularly. Learn more: <https://www.testicularcanceruk.com/>
- **Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Month:** Raising awareness of head and neck cancers, including key symptoms and the importance of early diagnosis. Learn more: [Head and neck cancer | Cancer Research UK](#)

- **Sarcoma Awareness Month:** Aims to increase understanding of sarcoma, a rare cancer, and highlight the importance of early diagnosis and specialist care. Learn more: [About sarcoma](#) | [Sarcoma UK](#)
- **Teenage and Young Adult Cancer Awareness Week:** Focused on improving awareness of cancer in young people and the unique challenges they face during diagnosis and treatment. Learn more: [CCLG - The Children & Young People's Cancer Association | Home](#)
- **World Health Day – 7 April:** A global awareness day highlighting key health priorities and promoting action to improve health outcomes worldwide. Learn more: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day>

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