



Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

Issue 132: 30 April 2026

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

As ever, your feedback and articles are very welcome: bobicb-bw.tvca.bulletin@nhs.net

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[April recap](#)

System update – New Thames Valley ICB launches



The new NHS Thames Valley Integrated Care Board was formally established on 1 April 2026, bringing together previous ICBs across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Frimley.

The new organisation will be responsible for planning and commissioning health services for around 2.5 million people, with a focus on improving population health, reducing inequalities and delivering more joined-up care across the system.

The new ICB is expected to support more consistent cancer pathways and reduce variation in access and outcomes across the region. Find out more: [NHS Thames Valley - Home](#)

NICE updates suspected cancer referral guidance (NG12)

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published a partial update to NG12, including changes to ovarian, endometrial and non-specific symptom pathways.

Key updates include age-based CA125 thresholds for ovarian cancer, revised referral guidance for post-menopausal bleeding (including HRT considerations), and new recommendations for investigating unexplained weight loss in people aged 60+. Read more: [Overview | Suspected cancer: recognition and referral | NICE](#)

Reducing inequalities remains central to cancer care improvement



NHS England's Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme highlights ongoing work to reduce variation in access, experience and outcomes, particularly for underserved groups.

A data-led approach is being used to identify gaps and support targeted action across systems.

[Read more here](#)

New guidance on assessing Integrated Care Board performance

NHS England has published updated guidance outlining how Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) will be assessed in 2025/26. The framework aims to provide a

proportionate, streamlined approach to performance assessment while supporting improvement and reducing administrative burden during ongoing system changes.

Read more: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/annual-assessment-of-integrated-care-boards-2025-26-supporting-guidance/>

Government targets faster access to clinical trials

New national ambitions aim to reduce the time taken to set up clinical trials, helping patients access innovative treatments more quickly. Find out more:

[Government drives forward its 150-day clinical trial target - GOV.UK](#)

Cancer waiting times remain below target

Cancer waiting times remain below target The 62-day referral-to-treatment standard continues to fall short of the 85% target, with treatment delays persisting across pathways. Read more:

<https://news.cancerresearchuk.org/2026/04/22/cancer-waiting-times-latest-updates-and-analysis/>

NHS cancer targets at risk without increased capacity

Analysis from The King's Fund highlights risks to delivery of national cancer targets without significant workforce and system investment. Read more: [NHS cancer targets at risk according to new King's Fund report | UK Healthcare News](#)

Cancer incidence reaches record levels

Cancer incidence reaches record levels Cancer diagnoses in the UK have exceeded 400,000 cases per year, increasing demand on NHS services and diagnostic capacity. Read more: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2026/apr/23/one-person-diagnosed-with-cancer-every-80-seconds-in-uk-report-reveals>

Update on ctDNA testing requirements

NHS England has confirmed that trusts are required to locally procure blood collection kits to support circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) testing for patients with suspected non-small cell lung and breast cancer, in line with the National Genomic Test Directory. More here: [NHS England » National genomic test directory](#)

[Coming up in May](#)

Cancer & genomics – Key updates



Change to ctDNA testing pathways

Circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) testing for breast cancer and non-small cell lung cancer is transferring to a new provider from April 2026, supporting ongoing development of genomic testing pathways. Read more:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/national-genomic-test-directories/>

Genomic Medicine Service moves towards single national model

Regional genomic services are progressing towards a unified Genomic Medicine Service, aiming to improve access, speed of diagnosis and delivery of personalised care for patients. Read more: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/genomics/>

National updates

Under 16 Cancer Patient Experience Survey



Under 16 Cancer Patient Experience Survey

If you receive a survey in the post, have your say.

Your feedback will help the NHS to improve cancer services for children and young people.

For more information, visit:

www.under16cancerexperiencesurvey.co.uk



The [Under 16 Cancer Patient Experience Survey \(U16 CPES\)](#) captures the experiences of children and young people receiving cancer care across England. Patients aged under 16 who received inpatient or day case care in 2025 will be invited to take part from mid-April 2026.

Teams are encouraged to help raise awareness of the survey to support participation. A range of [communications resources](#), including toolkits and promotional materials, are available to support local promotion. For more information: england.insight-queries@nhs.net

Pancreatic cancer surveillance update (EUROPAC pause)

The NHS Cancer Programme has confirmed that the EUROPAC programme is currently paused to new referrals following high demand. Individuals with a family history of pancreatic cancer may still be eligible for surveillance in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance (NG85), and should be advised to discuss this with their GP.

Patients with a family history of pancreatic cancer may still be eligible for surveillance in line with [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance](#) (NG85).

NHS England recommends looking to [EUROPAC's protocol](#) for advice on how patients should be managed.

[Alliance news](#)

Community insights highlight barriers to cancer care for South Asian women in Banbury



A community group in Banbury has just published a community research report sharing the experiences of around 20 South Asian women from Neithrop and Ruscote on cancer and access to healthcare. Sunrise Multicultural Project, supported throughout by Healthwatch Oxfordshire, carried out community action research to hear from the communities they work with in Banbury.

The report highlights how many women faced long waits for GP, dentist and hospital appointments, difficulties getting interpreting support, and mixed experiences of cancer information and diagnosis. It also includes recommendations to improve interpreting provision, GP access, cancer awareness and culturally appropriate care. Healthwatch Oxfordshire and Sunrise are working with TVCA to feed these findings into the development of the Cancer Alliance 10 Year Strategy. You can read the full report on Healthwatch Oxfordshire's [website](#)

High Street health service expands in High Wycombe



Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust has expanded its *Health on the High Street* service into High Wycombe Library, improving access to community-based health support.

From April, residents can access NHS Health Checks, daily blood pressure monitoring, and

pop-in support from local partners, including a prostate cancer support group.

A spring pilot of adult vaccination pop-ups is also underway.

Find out more: [Health on the High Street](#)

Contact: ann.poll1@nhs.net

Training

Primary Care – Cancer Relevant Update

NHS England’s GatewayC programme is hosting a free CPD-accredited webinar on recognising and managing breast symptoms, including mastalgia.

The session will cover early diagnosis, family history, and referral guidance, with a recording available after the event. More here: [GatewayC](#)

5-minute modules for cancer recognition - elearning for primary care



Cancer Research UK and Praktiki have developed a series of short eLearning modules to support cancer recognition and referral in primary care.

The “*What’s the Risk?*” pathway provides quick, practical guidance aligned to current referral standards and can be completed in under 5 minutes per module.

Access the modules here: [What’s the risk? Recognition and referral of cancer in primary care](#) or download the full list of sessions here: [5-minute](#)

[modules - cancer recognition, eLearning for primary care](#)

GPs Talk Cancer podcast series

New episodes of the GPs Talk Cancer series are available, covering topics including [contraception and cancer risk](#), and [palliative care](#)

[Events](#)

Webinar: Supporting earlier breast cancer diagnosis in primary care

NHS England's GatewayC programme is hosting a free CPD-accredited webinar on recognising and managing breast symptoms, including mastalgia.

The session will cover early diagnosis, family history, and referral guidance, with a recording available after the event. Log onto [GatewayC](#) and explore all webinars

[Patient communications](#)

Cancer campaign awareness calendar for May



**Skin Cancer
Awareness Month**



**Bladder Cancer
Awareness Month**



**Sun Awareness
All Year Round**



**World No Tobacco Day
– 31 May**



**Ovarian Cancer
Awareness Month**

Further info:

- **Skin Cancer Awareness Month** Focuses on prevention, early detection and sun safety messaging. Learn more: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/skin-cancer>
- **Sun Awareness** Promotes sun safety and skin cancer prevention throughout the year. Learn more: [Awareness Resources](#)
- **Bladder Cancer Awareness Month** Aims to raise awareness of symptoms such as blood in urine and the importance of early diagnosis. Learn more: <https://www.actionbladdercanceruk.org/>
- **Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month** Raises awareness of symptoms and encourages earlier diagnosis of ovarian cancer. Learn more: <https://ovarian.org.uk/>
- **World No Tobacco Day – 31 May** Highlights the harms of tobacco use and supports smoking cessation. Learn more: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-no-tobacco-day>

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