Thames Valley Cancer Alliance

Issue 137: 25 September 2026

Alongside a look back at news in September, we focus on what's coming up in October 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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September recap

Change to cervical screening intervals for people living with HIV

NHS cervical screening guidance has changed for people living with well-controlled HIV.

Those who receive a negative high-risk HPV result at their next routine cervical screening will now be recalled at the same national screening interval as people

who are not living with HIV. Annual cervical screening is no longer required for this group.

Read the full guidance and policy update.

Gynaecology CQG event brings Thames Valley teams together



Clinical teams and colleagues from across the Thames Valley came together on 10 September for a TVCA Gynaecology Clinical Quality Group (CQG) event focused on shared learning, collaboration and improving gynaecological cancer care.

The day brought together clinical leaders, multidisciplinary teams, researchers, data specialists and service improvement experts, with discussions covering pathway improvements, variation in care, cancer performance and innovation.

An afternoon educational programme explored developments in gynaecological oncology, including clinical trials, emerging treatments, surgical innovation and challenging radiology cases.

Read more about the event and see photos from the day.

Coming up in October

Breast cancer information for Urdu and Punjabi speaking communities

Healthwatch Oxfordshire and Sunrise Multicultural Project have developed new breast cancer and screening information for Urdu and Punjabi speaking communities in Oxfordshire.

The resources follow community research with South Asian women in Banbury, which explored experiences of accessing healthcare and highlighted the importance of practical, culturally appropriate information. The work also identified questions within the community about cancer checking, breast screening and diagnosis.

Working with a Clinical Nurse Specialist from Oxford Breast Imaging Centre, the project has used these insights to develop information that women can share within their communities.

The new leaflets are available in English, Urdu and Punjabi and can be downloaded from the Healthwatch Oxfordshire website.

Find out more and download the resources here

National updates

National Cancer Board meets for the first time

The reformed National Cancer Board has met for the first time, bringing together national leaders to strengthen the approach to improving cancer diagnosis, treatment and care.

The Board will provide national leadership and oversight as work continues to improve cancer services and outcomes for patients.

Read more about the National Cancer Board: Expert team to drive improvements in cancer care - GOV.UK

*See 'NATCAN State of the Nation Reports 2026 webinar' details under **Training** below.*

Have your say on tobacco and vaping proposals

The government is seeking views on proposals to further regulate the packaging, appearance and retail display of tobacco, vaping and nicotine products.

The consultation includes proposals for new packaging requirements, restrictions on the appearance of vapes and heated tobacco devices, and changes to how these products can be displayed in shops. The measures form part of wider action to reduce smoking, prevent young people from taking up vaping and support the shift from sickness to prevention. Read the consultation and have your say

The consultation closes at 11.59pm on Friday 2 October 2026.

GIFT study: exploring the financial impact of cancer



The GIFT Cohort Study is now recruiting people to take part in research exploring the financial impact of a cancer diagnosis.

The five-year UK-wide research project, led by Queen's University Belfast and funded by Wellcome, is examining how cancer-related financial pressures affect wellbeing, quality of life and everyday life.

Participants will be asked to complete a series of online surveys over 12 months. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the financial impact of cancer on people living with and beyond the disease.

Find out more and take part

More information about the wider GIFT project is available here

Supporting better health outcomes for people with a learning disability

NHS England has resources and guidance to support health services to improve care and health outcomes for people with a learning disability, including information on annual health checks, reasonable adjustments, health and care passports and the Learning Disability Register.

People with a learning disability continue to experience significant health inequalities and barriers to accessing healthcare. The resources can support primary care and other NHS services to identify and make appropriate adjustments to improve access and experience of care.

NHS England: improving health for people with a learning disability

Alliance news

Prostate cancer awareness takes to the pitch



Our Reading FC, Wycombe Wanderers and Oxford Utd prostate cancer awareness campaign went live in September, with TVCA's messages appearing pitchside, in programmes and in club social media during matches on 19 and 26 September.

The campaign uses stadium advertising to reach football fans with simple messages about the importance of knowing your risk, with audiences directed to further information and support here: Prostate cancer - thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk

The activity forms part of our wider work with local football clubs to take cancer awareness messages into under served communities across the Thames Valley.

Places still available for ACCEND & Personalised Care event

Allied Health Professionals and Clinical Nurse Specialists working in cancer services across the Thames Valley are invited to join us for our ACCEND & Personalised Care event on Wednesday 14 October.

Taking place in High Wycombe, the event will bring colleagues together for a practical and collaborative day exploring how the ACCEND framework can support professional development and the delivery of personalised cancer care.

The programme includes national and local speakers, lived experience, practical examples of ACCEND in action, workshops and opportunities to network with colleagues from across the cancer workforce. Sessions will explore areas including prehabilitation and rehabilitation, the ACCEND ePortfolio, professional development and the use of AI and automation.

Wednesday 14 October, 9.30am–4.15pm
Holiday Inn, Handy Cross, High Wycombe

Places are still available but booking is essential.

View the full programme and book your place: ACCEND & Personalised Care

Bowel cancer awareness van takes to the road



Our new bowel cancer community awareness van launched on 24 September at Ikea in Reading, taking cancer awareness messages and advice directly into communities across the Thames Valley.

The van is visiting locations across the region to help people understand the signs and symptoms of bowel cancer, the importance of taking part in bowel cancer screening, and when to contact their GP.

Van dates and locations available on the TVCA website: Campaigns and events - thamesvalleycanceralliance.nhs.uk

If the van is at a site near you, please share with your patients and communities. Feel free to pop along and take a pic of the big orange bowel van!

'Know the signs' prostate cancer communications toolkit now live

TVCA has launched a new 'Know the signs. Know your risk. Act early.' prostate cancer communications toolkit, with ready-to-use resources to help raise awareness of prostate cancer.

The materials are free to use and share with patients, local communities, colleagues and wider networks, helping more people understand their risk and know when to seek advice.

Access and share the prostate cancer communications toolkit here: TVCA prostate cancer communications toolkit

Training

Improving breast surgery pathology turnaround times

The Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) programme is hosting a webinar on Thursday 1 October, 12.30pm to 1.30pm, sharing good practice for improving breast surgery pathology turnaround times.

Clinical teams from Bolton, Airedale and Newcastle will share examples of improvements across the pathway, from biopsy or surgery through to results, and how these can help providers meet the Faster Diagnosis Standard.

The webinar is particularly relevant to colleagues involved in the clinical and operational management of breast cancer services, including surgeons, radiologists and pathology teams.

Find out more and register for the webinar

NATCAN State of the Nation Reports 2026 webinar series

The National Cancer Audit Collaborating Centre (NATCAN) is hosting a series of webinars exploring key findings from the 2026 State of the Nation cancer audit reports.

Three themed sessions in November will cover diagnosis, treatment and support; treatment variation; and outcomes and survival, bringing together findings across the national cancer audits. The webinars are open to clinicians, nurses, allied health professionals, Cancer Alliances, NHS staff, patients and the public.

For more and to register visit: Webinar Series: Exploring Key Findings from the 2026 State of the Nation Reports

Events

Shine a Light on Co-production

NHS England is running a series of online **Shine a Light on Co-production** events, exploring what can be achieved when NHS teams work in partnership with people with lived experience.

Each session shares examples of co-produced improvement, including what worked, challenges encountered and practical tips for involving people in improving services.

The next session takes place on Tuesday 20 October, 10.30am to 12pm, with further sessions running monthly through to March 2027.

Find out more and register for a session

Roots of Resilience: the future of integrated cancer care

The Royal Marsden is holding a free study day exploring the future of integrated cancer care on Tuesday 8 December in Chelsea.

Roots of Resilience will focus on cancer prehabilitation and rehabilitation and how these can support people affected by cancer and improve outcomes.

The event is aimed at healthcare professionals involved in the delivery of prehabilitation and rehabilitation services.

Find out more and register.

Patient communications

Cancer awareness campaigns in October



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, providing an opportunity to raise awareness of breast cancer, breast changes and symptoms, screening and the importance of earlier diagnosis.

TVCA will be sharing information and resources throughout the month, including materials from our new breast cancer awareness pilot in Slough and Oxford alongside Caja.

Breast Cancer Now also marks Wear it Pink on Friday 23 October 2026

Black History Month

Black History Month provides an important opportunity to support conversations about cancer inequalities and awareness in Black communities.

TVCA activity will include prostate cancer awareness, highlighting the increased risk for Black men, alongside our Barbershop Uncut Stories events in Reading.

Stoptober

Stoptober encourages people who smoke to make a quit attempt during October. TVCA will support the campaign using national materials and messages highlighting the benefits of stopping smoking, including reducing the risk of cancer.

Stoptober is included in the UK public health campaign calendar throughout October.

Liver Cancer Awareness Month

October is also Liver Cancer Awareness Month, providing an opportunity to raise awareness of liver cancer, its risk factors and possible signs and symptoms, and to signpost people to reliable information and support.

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BlueSky

Instagram

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Thames Valley Cancer Alliance







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