

National Cancer Programme

BULLETIN

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This Month in Cancer

Professor Sir Mike Richards, National Cancer Director

Dear Colleague

On 24 November, the Operating Framework for the NHS for next year was published. While much of the Operating Framework is relevant to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer, I thought I would pull out a few items of particular interest to delivering on the Cancer Outcomes Strategy:

- * confirmation that the cancer waiting times standards will remain
- * NHS organisations should continue to work to meet the expectations set out in the Cancer Outcomes Strategy
- * the expectation that less than 1 per cent of patients will wait longer than six weeks for a diagnostic test - this will of course be very important for earlier diagnosis of cancer. We know, for example, that some Trusts are currently not undertaking all endoscopy tests within 6 weeks.
- * the focus on meeting the quality and productivity challenge - we know that improvements can be achieved in the quality of cancer patient care at the same time as making resource savings, and our challenge is to get these improvements introduced across the NHS.

I also greatly welcome the focus in the Operating Framework on improving care for older people - which is of course very relevant to cancer services.

Other highlights of this month have been a very successful National Radiotherapy Implementation Group conference, where the new Malthus planning tool was launched, and the lung cancer symptom awareness campaign in the Midlands.

We are at present taking stock on the progress made over the last year in implementing the Strategy, as well as considering plans for next year, and hope shortly to be in a position to publish the first annual report on the Strategy.

Professor Sir Mike Richards
National Cancer Director

Policy News

'Be Clear on Cancer' – Update on National Bowel Cancer Symptom Awareness Campaign

The national bowel cancer campaign, which will include TV, radio, press and bus advertising, will launch on 30 January 2012 and run until the end of March. The campaign seeks to raise public awareness of the key symptoms of bowel cancer and encourage people with symptoms to go to their doctor early. The goal of the Be Clear on Cancer campaigns is to improve earlier diagnosis of cancer.

The Department continues to engage with Trusts, SHAs, Cancer Networks and the professional bodies to help prepare for the impact of this campaign. Based on evidence from the pilot campaign, a significant increase in demand for endoscopy services is expected.

To receive regular email updates about the campaign, or to receive a copy of a slide pack with information about the campaign, please contact Beth.Capper@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

'Be Clear on Cancer' – Update on Regional Lung Cancer Symptom Awareness Campaign

The Department ran a five-week regional lung cancer awareness campaign in the Midlands during October and November 2011, to improve earlier diagnosis of lung cancer. The campaign, featuring TV and radio advertising, encouraged people who have had a cough for more than three weeks to see their GP. In addition to the media campaign, over 6000 people were reached through ten face to face lung cancer awareness events held in the area. Cancer Networks worked with local providers to prepare for the response to the campaign.

The campaign evaluation is now underway and the results will be shared when they are available. For further information about the campaign visit: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/spotcancerearly>

SunSmart campaign evaluated

The 'SunSmart' campaign, funded by the Department of Health and run by Cancer Research UK, is providing evidence-based information about skin cancer and sun protection through a range of activities and channels during 2011/12.

Evaluation has just been completed on '*Feel the Summer. Not the Burn*', a 'SunSmart' campaign that took place this summer. It focused on 16-24 year

olds (particularly young women and C2DEs) and featured high-profile celebrity involvement from Nicola Roberts and a successful partnership with the popular 'T4 On The Beach' music festival. Results show that 35,000 festival-goers were exposed to the campaign on-site, over 20,000 people accessed the T4 SunSmart online hub and around 1.3m women aged 16-24 were reached via advertorials in key magazines.

In the post-campaign survey, the % of people reporting burning 'sometimes' over the course of summer 2011 has shown a statistically significant drop from 54% in 2010 to 41% this year. People who had seen the campaign were also more likely to report that they would wear at least SPF15 sunscreen in future (72% up from 52%: statistically significant).

More information about the SunSmart results will be available shortly at: <http://www.sunsmart.org.uk/>

International Rare Cancers Initiative Launched

On 18 November Cancer Research UK, National Institute for Health Research Cancer Research Network (NCRN) and other international research groups announced the launch of an initiative to encourage the development of new treatments for patients with rarer cancers.

The initiative will design and fund clinical trials of treatments for rare cancers. Rare cancers are defined as those which occur in approximately fewer than two cases per 100,000 people. Initially the focus will be on designing clinical trials for five cancer types: salivary gland cancer, small bowel adenocarcinoma, gynaecological sarcoma, ocular melanoma (melanoma of the eye) and penile cancer.

For more information about the initiative visit: [Cancer Research UK](#)

Palliative Care Funding System Pilots

The Department has issued a call for expressions of interest from organisations wishing to apply to be Palliative Care Funding pilot sites. We are seeking to set up a number of pilot sites to gather the information needed to inform decisions on the creation of a new funding system for palliative care, for adults and children, and to consider the proposals of the independent Palliative Care Funding Report. The deadline for expressions of interest is 31 January 2012.

For more information visit <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/11/palliative-care-funding/>
or e-mail: palliativecarefunding@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Implementation news

Pfizer Annual Excellence Oncology Awards recognises the success of the NHS Improvement cancer teams working across the NHS

NHS Improvement – Cancer has dominated this year’s Pfizer Excellence in Oncology Awards 2011. The Transforming Inpatient Care team won ‘Best Service Improvement’ for building the clinical evidence to support the ‘delivering of major breast surgery as a day case or one night stay (excluding reconstruction).

In the same category the Living with and Beyond Cancer for Children and Young People team was highly commended for the work surrounding the aftercare models for children and young people surviving cancer.

The National Cancer Survivorship Initiative, which NHS Improvement is a key partner in, was ‘highly commended’ in their category for ‘Best Support Initiative’ for the work surrounding the treatment summary for people living with and beyond cancer.

For further information visit: www.improvement.nhs.uk/cancer

Malthus Workbench Tool

On 2 November, at the National Radiotherapy Advisory Group (NRAG) conference, the National Radiotherapy Implementation Group (NRIG) launched a new modelling tool to help support local planning assumptions for radiotherapy demand. The Malthus tool updates previous work done within the NRAG.

For more information about the tool visit: <http://www.camradiotherapy.org.uk/malthus> or contact Tim Cooper at the National Cancer Action Team timcooper@nhs.net

NICE Pathways

‘NICE Pathways’ is an online tool for health and social care professionals that brings together all related NICE guidance and associated products in a set of interactive topic-based diagrams. They provide an easier and more intuitive way to find, access and use NICE guidance. NICE Pathways have been published for breast and prostate cancer.

For more information on the tool visit: [Breast Cancer](#) and [Prostate Cancer](#)

New NHS Information Centre Indicator Portal

One thousand indicators covering a wide range of population health topics have been brought together in the NHS Information Centre's new Indicator Portal, launched at the beginning of November. It currently includes indicators previously on the Clinical and Health Outcomes Knowledge Base, the Local Basket of Inequalities Indicators and the Summary Hospital-level Mortality Indicator. The resource will help support staff in planning and monitoring of services including cancer services. For more information visit: [NHS Information Centre Portal](#)

Publications

ONS Cancer Survival Bulletin

On 15 November, ONS published a bulletin of cancer survival statistics for patients diagnosed with one of the 21 most common cancers in England during 2005-2009 and followed up to December 31, 2010. The bulletin showed that the general trend of increasing survival continued for patients diagnosed during this period. For more information visit:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk>

Guideline on colorectal cancer care launched to promote best practice

On the 9 November, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) published its first guideline on colorectal cancer care. This sets out recommendations for the treatment of colorectal cancer from diagnosis through to management, ongoing care and support. For more information visit: [NICE Colorectal Guidelines](#)

Cervical Screening Programme 2010-11

On 24 November, the NHS Information Centre published its statistics on the NHS Cervical Screening Programme for the period 2010-11. The statistics show that 3.4 million women, aged between 25-64, were tested in 2010-11. Women were also being sent their screening results faster, with nearly 83 per cent of test results in England being sent out by primary care organisations (PCOs) within a fortnight, compared to nearly 45 per cent in 2009-10.

For more information visit: [NHS IC Cervical Screening](#)

Cancer Waiting Times Statistics

The National Statistics for cancer waiting times covering Quarter 2 (July, August and September) 2011/12 were published on the 25 November 2011.

Statistics for Q2 2011/12 show that national performance has been maintained above the operational standards for each of the cancer waiting times requirements, and that a high level of service continues to be provided on all patient pathways that are monitored within these statistics.

For more information visit:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/11/cancer-waiting-times/>

Practice guidance on the management of acute and chronic GI problems arising as a result of treatment for cancer

The guidance published in the BMJ on the 5 November, aims to help clinicians be aware of the acute and chronic gastrointestinal problems arising from cancer treatment and suggests ways that these can be managed. For more information on this article visit:

[Practice guidance on the management of acute and chronic gastrointestinal problems arising as a result of treatment for cancer](#)

The National Cancer Survivorship Initiative: New and Emerging Evidence on the Ongoing Needs of Cancer Survivors

On the 8 November, the British Journal of Cancer published a supplement on cancer survivorship. For more information visit:

[British Journal of Cancer NCSI Supplement](#)

National Audit of Cancer Diagnosis in Primary Care

On 25 November, the Royal College of General Practitioners' Clinical Innovation and Research Centre (CIRC), published its report of the findings of the National Audit of Cancer Diagnosis in Primary Care, undertaken in 2009/2010 as part of the Department of Health's National Awareness and Early Diagnosis Initiative.

The report summarises an analysis of primary care data related to cancer and early diagnosis. The analysis was based on submitted audit templates completed at practice level and analysed centrally by NCIN and the RCGP. The purpose of the audit was to inform our knowledge of the time intervals between presentation and referral for cancer.

The report found that 73.2 per cent of patients visiting their GP were referred to a specialist after only one or two consultations and that nearly 60 per cent of all patients referred attended secondary care within two weeks.

For more information on the press release and the report visit:

[Press Releases](#)

and [National Audit of Cancer Diagnosis in Primary Care Report](#)

New NHS Operating Framework

The new NHS Operating Framework setting out the business and planning arrangements for the NHS in England for the next year was published on 24 November.

The Operating Framework for the NHS in England 2012/13 describes the national priorities, system levers and enablers needed for NHS organisations to maintain and improve the quality of services provided, while delivering transformational change and maintaining financial stability.

It sets out the practical steps that need to be taken to carry the NHS through a strong and stable transition over the next year, maintaining high quality standards and financial grip, as the NHS moves towards the new modernised system envisaged in Liberating the NHS.

For more information visit:

[NHS Operating Framework 2012-13](#)

2010-11 Reference Costs

The 2010/11 reference costs, including national schedules of average unit costs, the reference costs index (RCI) and source data, were published on 17 November. Amongst other uses, they will support benchmarking and contracting for non-tariff services in 2012/13. It includes costs for haematology, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and specialist palliative care. The results of the 2011 patient level and information costing systems (PLICS) survey were also published.

For more information visit

Reference costs www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/11/reference-costs/

PLICS www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/11/plics-survey-results/

What's On?

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Consultations

The Clinical Guidance for prostate cancer is being updated. Consultation on the draft scope with stakeholders is from 28 November – 16 December 2011. For more information on the consultation visit:

[CG58 Prostate cancer:diagnosis and management](#)

Draft guidelines on the safe and effective prescribing of strong opioids in palliative care for adults will be consulted on during the period 2 December 2011- 6 January 2012. For more information visit: [Opioids in palliative care](#)

To get involved in the development of NICE Clinical guidelines and quality standards you can [register your organisation as a stakeholder](#).

Britain Against Cancer Conference

The Britain Against Cancer Conference will be taking place on Tuesday 13 December at Central Hall in Westminster. '*Commissioning quality – Getting cancer services right in the new NHS*' will be the focus for this year's conference. Key decision makers in health will speak at the conference including Secretary of State for Health, Andrew Lansley MP, Shadow Health Minister, Emily Thornberry MP, the National Cancer Director, Prof Sir Mike Richards, and the NHS Chief Executive, Sir David Nicholson.

For more information visit: [BAC Conference](#)

Editor's Notes

Unless otherwise stated, guidance referred to in the bulletin has not been commissioned or endorsed by the Department of Health - it is evidence that organisations and professionals may find helpful in improving practice. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is the Department's sole provider of accredited evidence and guidance, which can be found on the Institute's website at www.nice.org.uk.

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