



News Story

Monday 10 March 2014

DON'T IGNORE A PERSISTENT COUGH

Be Clear on Cancer Campaign re-airs to help save lives.

A Be Clear on Cancer campaign, aimed at increasing awareness of the symptoms of lung cancer, has been considered so successful it is being repeated.

The Public Health England campaign first ran nationally throughout England in May to July 2012. Recent data found that around 700 extra people were diagnosed with lung cancer in these months when compared to the same period in the previous year. Approximately 400 more people were diagnosed at an early stage, and around 300 more patients had surgery, giving them the best chance of prolonged survival.

Adverts will now run on TV, radio and in the press until the end of April in a bid to make more people aware of the symptoms of lung cancer and encourage them to visit their GP if they have had a cough for three weeks or more – a key symptom of the disease.

Professor Kevin Fenton, National Director of Health and Wellbeing at Public Health England, said:

“We know this campaign is effective in driving people with lung cancer symptoms into GP surgeries – the figures speak for themselves.

“We are therefore running the campaign again to further increase symptom awareness levels and help improve early diagnosis of lung cancer.

“Finding lung cancer early makes it more treatable so it’s important to know the symptoms and, if you spot any, visit your doctor straight away – it could save your life.”

Lung cancer is currently England's biggest cancer killer, causing around 28,100 deaths each year and with around 34,900 people diagnosed annually. Those diagnosed at the earliest stage are 5 times more likely to survive lung cancer for at least 5 years than those diagnosed at a late stage.ⁱ

The Be Clear on Cancer lung cancer campaign is aimed at men and women over the age of 50, as they are most at risk of the disease.

Sean Duffy, National Clinical Director for Cancer at NHS England, said:

“I am delighted that results suggest that hundreds of patients received potentially life-saving surgery following the first national campaign for lung cancer. Be Clear on Cancer, alongside continued work to improve access to diagnostics and treatments, is helping to move things in the right direction for lung cancer. However, we still have a long way to go to match the best in Europe and must keep focussed on how we can improve the outcomes for all cancer patients.”

ⁱ 35 per cent of people diagnosed at the earliest stage (TNM stage 1) survive at least five years compared to under 7 per cent for those diagnosed at a late stage (TNM stage 3 & 4). Source: The National Cancer Registration Service (NCRS), Eastern Office; patients diagnosed with lung cancer during 2003-2006 in the former Anglia Cancer Network