

Cancer and the NHS Long Term Plan

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Health and care leaders have come together to develop a Long Term Plan to make the NHS fit for the future, and to get the most value for patients out of every pound of taxpayers' investment. Our plan has been drawn up by those who know the NHS best, including frontline health and care staff, patient groups and other experts.

To build on progress made on cancer, the NHS Long Term Plan will:

- Diagnose 75% of cancers at stage 1 or 2 by 2028, including lowering the age for bowel screening, rolling out HPV primary screening and extending lung health checks.
- Roll out new Rapid Diagnostic Centres across the country so patients displaying symptoms of cancer can be assessed and diagnosed in as little as a day.
- Introduce a new, faster diagnosis standard which will ensure that patients receive a definitive diagnosis or ruling out of cancer within 28 days.
- Deliver personalised cancer care for all, giving patients more say over the care they receive.
- Secure our place at the cutting edge of research, offering genomic testing to all cancer patients who would benefit, and speeding up the adoption of new, effective tests and treatments.

Cancer survival is the highest it's ever been. But despite the progress the NHS has made since the launch of the Cancer Strategy, we know that we can save even more lives by catching more cancers early and starting treatment fast.

The NHS Long Term Plan makes a commitment to increase the proportion of people diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 of cancer to 75% over the coming decade.

Actions will include raising awareness of the symptoms of cancer with the public and clinicians, speeding up diagnosis by removing barriers to referral for GPs, and investing in improved screening programmes and testing facilities.

Those diagnosed with cancer will also benefit from safer, more precise treatments, including advanced radiotherapy techniques, with fewer side effects and shorter treatment times.

The offer of genomic testing to all people with cancer for whom there would be clinical benefit, beginning with children and young people, will also increasingly enable more precise diagnosis, and better-targeted and safer treatments.

And with ever more people living with and beyond cancer, the NHS Long Term Plan includes clear actions to improve the quality of support for patients before, after and during their treatment.

Over the next three years, every patient with cancer for whom it is clinically appropriate will get a full assessment of their needs, an individual care plan and access to support for their wider health and wellbeing, and from 2019 we will introduce a quality of life metric to track and respond to the long-term impact of cancer.

Case study

Guy's and St Thomas' trust provide quick access to a range of diagnostic tests for patients whose symptoms are non-specific but concerning, so that a treatment plan can be put in place for them as soon as possible.

Patients are referred by their GP or Accident and Emergency department. Investigative tests are then completed on the same day or within 7 days. At the follow-up appointment, patients are either discharged, referred to another specialist or receive a rapid specialist referral for cancer treatment:

570 patients have attended the Clinic in its first 16 months.

Almost 59% were diagnosed with a benign but serious condition.

Just under 9% were diagnosed with cancer and of those, 1 in 4 cancers were diagnosed at an early stage.