

West Midlands Cancer Alliance (WMCA)

Wednesday 24 September 2025

Board Briefing Note

For the attention of WMCA Board Members, Accountable Officers, CEOs, Cancer Managers and Cancer Leads in ICB and provider organisations:

The WMCA Board met face to face on Wednesday 24th September 2025 to review the work and progress of the partner organisations in the WMCA. The meeting was chaired by Professor Andy Hardy, CEO of University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) NHS Trust. The Board had representation from all West Midlands Integrated Care Systems (ICSs). It also has representatives from Specialised Commissioning, Screening, Healthwatch, Public Health, NHS England (NHSE) and patient representation.

Enhancing Cancer Care Through Industry Collaboration – The Midlands Partnership Initiative:

Alison Tonge, Executive Director, Arden and Gem CSU provided an update to the WMCA Board for the mobilisation of the Cancer Alliance Partnership Hub. The paper presented details of the nominated host organisation and a funding request to support mobilisation and recruitment and identified the strategic cross-cutting priorities where collaboration between the NHS and industry will deliver transformational change. The funding request and nomination of University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust (UHL) was approved by Board members present. For further information contact: alison.tonge1@nhs.net

Performance and Programme Update:

Performance Update:

Cancer Waiting Time (CWT): WMCA saw a greater improvement in performance for all three CWT measures than was reported at a national level. Most notably, 62-day performance was up 4.4% year-on-year at WMCA compared to a 1.2% increase nationally, more than halving the gap between the two.

28-Day Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS) – Target = 80% by March 2026: WMCA bucked the national trend during July with performance of 76.7%, an improvement of 0.5% compared to June, placing WMCA above national performance for the first time in 13 months. This ranked WMCA 13th nationally (out of 20 Alliances), up from 15th place in the previous month.

31-Day Decision to Treat to Treatment – Target = 96%: Overall, WMCA performance during July was 92.2%. This was approximately 250 patients short of achieving the 96% 31-day

standard (out of over 6,500 treated) but was an improvement of 0.2% compared to June. This saw WMCA rank 12th out of 20 Cancer Alliance nationally in March, down from 11th the previous month. It should be noted that Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin ICB (up 4.4%) were the most improved of the 42 ICBs nationally for performance during July when compared to June. Pathway improvement support continues to be deployed to trusts across the West Midlands. For more information contact: andy.field2@nhs.net.

Screening Update:

Bowel Cancer Summary: Bowel Screening Hubs: Managed Services Contract – Regions are awaiting next steps from the national team following evaluation of the procurement. Existing ~~crystal~~ contracts extended and in place to support the procurement timeline. All BSCP's have commenced and are now live with the age 52-50-year cohort – no reported concerns.

Fit@80 Early Adopter: Further expressions of interest (EOIs) have been submitted by those centres who are in a readiness position to switch on the threshold change which is planned go live Q4 2025/2026 – Q1 2026/2027. Funding will only be available for screening activity, no transformational funding for endoscopy will be made available for this proposed wave and no proposed capital funding.

Breast Screening: Overall Regional Round Length, coverage and uptake continues to report an improving position, with an identified increase in performance month on month.

Cervical screening: Cervical Turn-around-times continue to be closely monitored in region across both Labs – no reported concerns at the point of WMCA reporting period. Colposcopy referrals continued to be closely monitored and flagged with relevant Systems and Providers where standards are not being achieved. For more information contact: stephanie.beaumont@nhs.net.

WMCA Cancer Programme Delivery Group Report:

Debra Palmer, Associate Director WMCA, provided an update on WMCA Cancer Programme Delivery. The WMCA completed Quarter One Assurance and achieved a green fully assured rating, with programme delivery on track and no major risks. Quarter two reporting has commenced while continuing to build infrastructure and readiness for the upcoming cancer plan. Key focus areas include workforce data analytics, community engagement, and operational performance improvement, with targeted support for providers and sustainability work across cancer pathways. Progress is also being made in early diagnosis and treatment variation, including revised lung screening trajectories, improved liver surveillance data collection, and ongoing demand and capacity reviews. For further information contact: Debra.palmer2@nhs.net

West Midlands Cancer Alliance MDT Quality Assurance Programme:

John Elliott, Programme Manager WMCA, presented an update on the Peer Review/MDT Quality Assurance programme. The WMCA launched a peer review programme earlier this year to provide a quality assurance framework for MDT services, addressing the gap left by the discontinued National Cancer Peer Review. The programme will begin with skin services,

aiming to expand across all MDTs over 26–36 months, with engagement from ICB and provider cancer boards being key to its success.

Gynaecology Operational Delivery Network Report:

Dr Elaine Andrews, Deputy Director of Strategy and Transformation University Hospital North Midlands (UHNM) presented the Gynaecology Operational Delivery Network (ODN) closing report to members identifying the key achievements of the network ahead of the formal closure in October 2025. The gynaecology ODN presented recommendations to the WMCA Board to sustain progress and drive further improvement. Thanks were given to Elaine, the ODN and Eden Tagg Programme Manager for their work. For further information contact: Elaine.Andrews2@uhnm.nhs.uk

HPV Programme:

Dr Ash Banerjee, Screening and Immunisation Lead (Public Health Consultant) NHS England presented an update on the HPV Vaccination Programme, focusing on background of the programme, process and current performance. There is a current catch up programme in place and colleagues were asked to support. Further data to be shared. For further information, contact: ashisbanerjee@nhs.net

Business and Governance:

Clinical Cabinet Report: Dr Lydia Fresco, Clinical Director presented an overview of the WMCA Clinical Cabinet and included details on all papers ratified since June 2024. Guidelines approved in recent meetings included:

- Lung Screening Incidental Findings Papers
- SACT Antiemetics v4.0
- SACT GCSF v2.0
- SACT Management Policy
- MSCC AO & CUP MDT Referral Proforma
- Scalp Cooling for Adults Oncology Patients Guidelines
- ACT Spillage Guideline v 5.0 Sept 2025
- Pregnancy testing for adults receiving SACT, v1.0 September 2025
- Cancer Multidisciplinary Meeting Best Practice Standardisation Guidance
- Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Lead Job Description

Investment Committee and Finance Report: Christian Jones presented a finance paper presented summarising investments made to date. For further information, please contact: rwh-tr.wmca-finance@nhs.net

Patient Advocate Discussion: Phil Barrett presented a patient advocate report summarising patient advocate activities since June 2025. Helen Thomas fed back on role of patient advocates. For further information, please contact: Carolyn.parker3@nhs.net

FEEDBACK FROM ICB CANCER BOARDS:

Representatives from each ICB Cancer Board in attendance presented updates by exception.

Any Other Business:

No other business was noted; therefore, the meeting was closed.

FOR REFERENCE:

For further information please contact: Sarah Hughes, Managing Director, Midlands Cancer Alliances, email: sarah.hughes25@nhs.net, Telephone: 07876 869436.

Date of next Board Meeting: The next meeting of West Midland Cancer Alliance will be on Wednesday 26th November 2025 (10am – 12pm). This meeting will be held face-to-face only.

Please find below a table showing you who your West Midlands Cancer Alliance ICB representatives are:

ICB	Cancer Alliance Board ICB Representatives
Coventry and Warwickshire	Joseph Hardwicke / Richard Rawlinson Joseph.hardwicke@uhcw.nhs.uk / richardrawlinson@nhs.net
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	Gary Free / Helen Ashley gary.free@nhs.net / Helen.Ashley@uhnm.nhs.uk
Birmingham & Solihull	David Peake / Martin Richardson David.Peake@uhb.nhs.uk / Martin.richardson@uhb.nhs.uk
Hereford and Worcestershire	Mari Gay / Angus Thomson marigay@nhs.net / angus.thomson1@nhs.net
Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin	Ned Hobbs / Ned.hobbs1@nhs.net /
Black Country	Diane Wake / Pip Mayo d.wake@nhs.net / pip.mayo@nhs.net