



An update from the **West Midlands Cancer Alliance**



June 2025

Our monthly newsletter is designed to keep you up to date with the latest cancer events, updates and projects happening throughout the West Midlands. Please feel free to share this newsletter within your teams. If you would like to submit an article for a future newsletter, please contact angela.gould1@nhs.net.

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In the spotlight

Brain cancer excellence recognised in the West Midlands

A West Midlands cancer network has been recognised for excellence in the treatment, research and care of patients with brain tumours.

The West Midlands Neuro-Oncology network has gained the prestigious 'Tessa Jowell Centre of Excellence' status, following rigorous expert-led assessment by the Tessa Jowell Brain Cancer Mission (TJBCM).

The network comprises of partnership working between University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, University Hospitals North Midlands NHS Foundation Trust and the University of Birmingham.

The West Midlands Cancer Alliance (WMCA) helped support the 'Centre of Excellence' application by bringing together academic co-leads, with the aim of improving the equity of access to services and encouraging the sharing of best practice across sites. Read the full story [here](#).



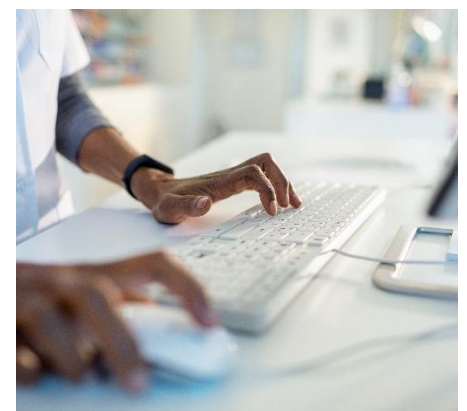
Latest news

GPs with a specialist interest in transgender care

Are you a GP with a specialist interest in transgender care? If so, we're seeking your expertise to help us with an important piece of health inequalities work.

We're looking for your support to help create information for both primary care and patients regarding the new opt-in process, promote and raise awareness of the chance, and to support the national screening programmes. The piece of work would also involve developing a universal standard operating procedure (SOP) for best practice when transferring a patient's medical record when a gender change is made.

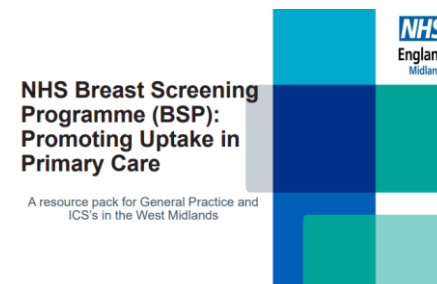
If you are interested in participating in this programme of work, please contact us on rwh-tr.wmcanceralliance@nhs.net.



New NHSE Breast Screening GP pack for Primary Care

The NHSE Breast Screening GP pack for primary care has been updated following evaluation. The comprehensive information resource is designed to support the screening process. Whether you are a clinician or an administrative staff member, this pack is tailored to assist you.

The pack can be accessed on our new [Primary Care resources webpage](#).



Upper GI Expert Advisory Group event success

A big thank you to everyone who attended our Upper GI Expert Advisory Group and educational event on 5 June. A highlight of the event was the launch of the newly redrafted Urgent Suspected Cancer referral form for Upper GI, which received positive feedback from attendees, with plans underway to standardise the form across the region, incorporating valuable suggestions from the group. Additionally, the event explored updated OG clinical guidelines, as well as pathways to direct access endoscopy and capsule sponge service, offering essential insights that will enhance referral pathways and process.



What's happening?

Cancer Bus tours

All aboard! The Cancer Bus tour is back, calling at several key locations across Coventry and Warwickshire (C&W) and Birmingham and Solihull (BSOL) throughout June. The bus tours are helping raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer and encourage the public to visit their GP for potentially life-saving checks if they notice something unusual.

Check out the bus timetables below:

- [C&W bus information](#)
- [BSOL bus information](#)



Black Country Integrated Care Board upcoming events

Black Country Integrated Care System (ICS) and City of Wolverhampton Council are holding a skin cancer awareness community drop-in session on Tuesday 8 July, 9am – 2pm. The session will take place at Wolverhampton Retail Market, where the dermatology team will be on hand to perform mole and skin lesion checks and to discuss good skin health, protection and skin cancer signs and symptoms.

The partnership is also hosting a selection of cancer awareness community drop-in sessions throughout June, July and August. Find out more [here](#).



£1 million cancer trial reaches major milestone

A £1 million TRIOMIC research study in the West Midlands has reached a major milestone in its aim to revolutionise the diagnosis of colorectal cancer.

The trial, being run by The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), has now recruited more than 500 patients from Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin in its study, which will reduce the amount of time patients are waiting and worrying about a colorectal cancer diagnosis. Read the full story [here](#).



Cancer screening teams unveil two new state-of-the-art mobile units

Patients across Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire can now access life-saving screening closer to home following the opening of two new cutting-edge mobile units.

The cancer screening units will significantly expand access to early detection services for both breast and lung cancer and were opened in ribbon-cutting ceremonies on Friday 6 June and Tuesday 10 June. Both units are equipped with advanced imaging technology to deliver high-quality diagnostics in community settings—eliminating the need for patients to travel into hospital. Read the full story [here](#).



Going the extra mile to support prostate cancer awareness

A Wolverhampton Nurse went the extra mile to mark this year's 'men's health week' (9 – 15 June) by supporting a sponsored walk for prostate cancer.

Kelly Kusinski, Urology Advanced Nurse Practitioner at The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, was on hand during the 'March for Men' to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of prostate cancer and share guidance on prostate specific antigen (PSA) testing.

Taking place on Father's Day (15 June), the walk aimed to raise funds for Prostate Cancer UK and support group BROS (Brothers Reaching Out to and for Support), as well as spark important conversations about prostate cancer – a disease which affects one in eight white men and one in four black men. Find out [more](#).



Cancer Experience of Care Improvement Collaborative ‘Cohort 6’ celebration event

The Cancer Experience of Care Improvement Collaborative (CIC) ‘Cohort 6’ celebration event was held at Guy’s and St Thomas’ Hospital on Tuesday 20 May.

Hosted by South East London Cancer Alliance, over 80 people attended the event which co-chaired by Cheryl Tackie (Co-Chair CIC Steering Group, and Chair of the Patient and Public Voice Forum, NHS Cancer Programme) and Jannike Nordlund (Programme Manager, Patient Involvement and Experience, SELCA).

CIC Cohort 7 will launch at the end of June and more information on this will be shared in due course. Julie Osbourne (SWFT) and Elle Hewitt (UHB) attended the event on behalf of their Trusts from the West Midlands. For more information, please contact carolyn.parker3@nhs.net.



Upcoming events

Upcoming Expert Advisory Group (EAG) meetings

Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs) provide specialist advice and guidance to the WMCA board on the standards of cancer care for patient, reflecting ‘Improving Outcomes Guidance’ recommendations, current best practice and opportunities for development.

Please see the below details of upcoming EAG meetings:

25 June	Lung EAG
25 June	Primary Care EAG
26 June	Psychosocial EAG
26 June	Skin EAG
3 July	Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary (HPB) EAG
10 July	Sarcoma EAG
15 July	Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy (SACT) EAG
17 July	Cancer Trust Managers and Lead Nurses EAG
24 July	Psychosocial EAG

Please note that these meetings are for EAG Members only. For more information about joining these meetings, please email: rwh-tr.wmcanceralliance@nhs.net.

*Please note that dates are correct at time of publication

Oncology study day

The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust are hosting an oncology study day for those with a particular interest in physical activity. The day aims to share insights from science and research alongside examples of good practice to make the case for physical activity to be a standard of care within cancer pathways.

Find out more: [The Royal Marsden Exercise Oncology Study Day | The Royal Marsden](#)



Development opportunities and additional learning

Check out our new Cancer Academy

Our [Cancer Academy](#) is a centralised platform designed to support lifelong learning for our current, and future, cancer workforce. Designed for our entire cancer workforce, our courses and extensive resources are aimed at enhancing your knowledge and helping you stay skilled and up to date in all thing’s cancer care.

Upcoming training for July can be found [here](#).

July’s offer includes:

- STRATified CANcer active surveillance (STRATCANS) programme for prostate cancer (2 July)
- Advanced Communication Skills training (7-8 July)
- Lung Cancer Incidental Findings webinar for Primary Care colleagues (9 July)
- Pelvic Radiation Disease 2025 networking event (11 July)
- Macmillan Community of Practice for GPs and GP trainees (16 July)

GatewayC campaign resources

GatewayC’s June communications are now available to download via the [Campaign Resource Hub](#). This month contains resources relating to Myeloma Awareness Week (16-22 June) and Cervical Cancer Awareness Week (19-24 June). You can also use these assets to help for any wider campaigns in promoting cancer education to your primary care networks.



For your information

New breast radiotherapy videos launched

A series of videos designed to support breast cancer patients undergoing radiotherapy treatment have been launched.

Aimed at patients having treatment at the six NHS trusts providing radiotherapy treatment across the region, the videos describe what patients can expect when they come to hospital for radiotherapy; and what they will experience as they go through their treatment.

The patient information videos have been produced by the West Midlands Radiotherapy Network (WMRN), working with representatives from the trusts and the [Lingen Davies Trust](#).

Find out more [here](#).



Cancer Research UK Health Systems update

The latest Cancer Research UK (CRUK) update includes:

- [Updated NG12 resources](#)
- [GP Bowel Screening Tool](#)
- [Cervical screening videos produced by Greater Manchester Cancer Alliance for women with learning disabilities and/or autism](#)
- [An innovation in radiotherapy briefing](#).



NHS Cancer Programme update

Cervical screening interval extension

It has been [announced](#) that the cervical screening interval will increase from 3 to 5 years for those aged 25-49, reflecting a more personalised approach to screening enabled by the move to HPV as the primary test. The change takes effect from next month.



Vacancies

WMCA Expert Advisory Group Recruitment:

WMCA Expert Advisory Group Recruitment:

The West Midlands Cancer Alliance are currently in the process of recruiting to vacancies for the following Expert Advisory Groups (EAG's):

- **Deputy Chair** – HPB EAG
- **Deputy Chair** - Haematology EAG
- **Deputy Chair** - Gynaecology EAG
- **Deputy Chair** - Metastatic Spinal Cord Compression, Acute Oncology Services and Cancer of Unknown Primary (MSCC, AO and CUP) EAG
- **Deputy Chair** - Head and Neck EAG
- **Chair** – Colorectal EAG
- **Chair** - SACT EAG

We are looking for candidates based on the following criteria:

- Ability to deliver national and regional work programme obligations.
- Demonstrable collaborative working with West Midlands Cancer Alliance.
- Experience with service change at scale.
- Credibility as a Cancer specialist in the West Midlands region.
- Regular attendance at EAGs or member of a Task and Finish group.
- Must be a current member of the West Midlands EAG group.

Candidates are asked to send their [expressions of interest forms](#) via email with accompanying CVs, stating why you would like to apply for this post, what you can bring to the post and your relevant experience for the role of Chair / Deputy Chair for the EAG to the following email: angela.gould1@nhs.net by 5pm on Friday 4 July 2025.

LGBTQIA+ Patient Advocate recruitment

The West Midlands Cancer Alliance (WMCA) are looking for LGBTQIA+ identifying patients who have lived experience of a cancer journey to join our expanding group of patient advocates. This could be their own experience of cancer or being there for a friend or a loved one on their cancer journey. A patient advocate participates in one of our cancer site Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs) and will be asked to express their views and opinions to help change, improve and shape the future of cancer care for the patient population of the West Midlands.

If you have any patients who may be interested in becoming a patient advocate or would like to find out further information, please contact the WMCA on rwh-tr.wmcapmo@nhs.net.



Primary Care update

Primary Care Cancer Focus – Dr Jim McMorran

Liquid biopsy and cancer detection

The concept of liquid biopsy is based on the knowledge that blood or secretions from the body contain tumour cells, nucleic acids, cellular components, and tumour metabolites (1).

An innovative test, named TriOx, analyses multiple features of DNA in the peripheral blood across six types of cancer (colorectal, oesophageal, pancreatic, renal, ovarian, and breast) and can distinguish between individuals with and without cancer (1):

- with respect to colon cancer - evidence suggests that a survival benefit from adjuvant chemotherapy may be obtained in a well-defined subgroup of patients with stage II colon cancer — namely, those with detectable ctDNA after surgery (2)
 - treating only the patients who had detectable ctDNA reduced the percentage of patients who received adjuvant therapy as compared with standard management and did not compromise recurrence-free survival

A statement from National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) describes this intervention:

"Researchers combined a cutting-edge DNA analysis technique, called TAPS, with machine learning, to analyse multiple key features from the DNA circulating in the blood.

The TriOx test was evaluated on blood samples from patients with and without cancer. It demonstrated the ability to detect cancers (including early-stage cancers) and distinguish between people who had cancer and those that did not with 94.9% sensitivity and 88.8% specificity. For any cancer test, it's important to minimise the number of people without cancer who are subjected to unnecessary procedures, while helping those with cancer to receive treatment sooner.

The cancer types evaluated in this study were:

- colorectal
- oesophageal
- pancreatic
- renal
- ovarian
- breast".

Reference:

1. Parums DV. A Review of Circulating Tumor DNA (ctDNA) and the Liquid Biopsy in Cancer Diagnosis, Screening, and Monitoring Treatment Response. Med Sci Monit. 2025 Apr 22;31:e949300
2. Tie J et al. DYNAMIC Investigators. Circulating Tumor DNA Analysis Guiding Adjuvant Therapy in Stage II Colon Cancer. N Engl J Med. 2022 Jun 16;386(24):2261-2272.
3. [National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\) - https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/new-blood-test-shows-promising-potential-early-cancer-detection](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/news/new-blood-test-shows-promising-potential-early-cancer-detection)