

POLICY UPDATE

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CANCER SUPPORT

February 2014

Welcome to 'Policy Update', a monthly bulletin on the latest policy developments of relevance to those with an interest in cancer.

If you are reading this document on screen, the web addresses are hyperlinks which will take you directly to the relevant web pages or documents. If you would like any further information or have any questions or comments about 'Policy Update', please contact Anna Baranski, Policy Analyst, on 020 7840 4984 or email abaranski@macmillan.org.uk

UK-wide	2
England	3
Northern Ireland.....	9
Scotland.....	10
Wales.....	12
Developments from NICE	14

UK-wide

Welfare reform research will inform future changes

NCVO is to undertake a major research project into the effects of recent welfare reforms on charities and their beneficiaries.

The year-long project will consider the effectiveness of recent welfare reforms and identify the impacts they have had. The review will take evidence from charities and is intended to inform thinking on any future changes to welfare policy.

Charities are encouraged to contribute to the call for evidence, which is open now and runs until 31 March.

[Click here for more information](#)

EU rules are denying children latest cancer drugs

Children with cancer are being denied new, potentially life-saving drugs, because EU rules are allowing companies to trial some drugs only in adults, leading cancer experts have warned.

[Click here for more information](#)

Lobbying Bill becomes law

The Lobbying Bill, or Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014, received royal assent and became law. On Tuesday the Government won votes in the Lords on two amendments and tied on another, meaning the bulk of the original proposal will pass into law. An amendment exempting staffing costs from the campaigning expenditure of charities and campaigning organisations that had been defeated in the commons was then subject to a vote in the Lords that tied by 245 votes to 245, meaning it did not become part of the Bill. Crossbencher Lord Harries of Pentregarth who tabled the amendment warned that attempting to separate the cost of time spent by staff on campaign-related activities from their other jobs would be a "bureaucratic nightmare."

Jane Hobson, head of policy at the Charity Commission, said "this legislation changes the rules that apply in the run-up to general elections, but does not challenge the important principle that charities are free to campaign, so long as they do so to further their missions." The Electoral Commission is expected to produce crucial guidance on the act for all non-party campaigners by early July. Macmillan, along with the NCVO and ACEVO who have been representing Macmillan during the progress of the Bill will be monitoring the guidance closely for implications affecting its work during election campaigns.

[Click here for more information](#)

MPs debate delay to PIP

The Commons had two opportunities to debate delays to payments of Personal Independence Payments including delays to cancer patients and terminally ill patients. The issues were raised during Questions to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

Mike Penning, The Minister of State for Disabled People, Department for Work and Pensions, heard MPs from all three main parties raise their concerns over very long delays, with the Minister admitting “the end to end journey time for people claiming PIP is too long—within the DWP as well as with Capita and Atos”. He added that “People suffering from terminal illnesses are being dealt with very quickly in most cases” and “the vast majority [of claimants] are getting their benefits” but conceded that the quality of processing needed work.

[Click here for more information](#)

A third of a million people now diagnosed with cancer every year

The number of people being diagnosed with cancer in the UK each year has hit more than 330,000 for the first time according to the latest figures published by Cancer Research UK. The figures show that survival has doubled in the last 40 years, and that since 2001, the number of diagnosed cases per year has increased by nearly 50,000.

[Click here for more information](#)

Care needs: financial services industry to develop products to help people plan

Government and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) have committed to working together to help people plan for their future care costs. Care and Support Minister, Norman Lamb, and the Director General of the ABI, Otto Thoresen, have signed a joint ‘statement of intent’ committing to work together to help people get the information they need to plan and make decisions about how to pay for their long term care, and create the right conditions for a larger market of financial products that will give people more choice. A number of companies have stated a commitment to developing this financial market and have indicated the sorts of products that could emerge. These include Aegon, Aviva, Legal & General and Swiss Re.

[Click here for more information](#)

England

MPs debate the confidentiality of patient medical records

The Commons saw a short debate on the confidentiality of patient health records following legislation passed in 2012 in which family doctors will be required to pass to a new national database created by NHS England all the medical records of the patients in that practice. Labour MP George Mudie raised concerns that there were security dangers and expressed “dismay and even anger at the deliberate manner in which the public have been deprived of consultation”

Conservative MP George Freeman said that the UK has “quietly come to lead in the appliance and use of anonymised cohort data sets and... specific patient data sets in particular disease areas” which “are utterly key to the quiet revolution in 21st century health care and medicine”.

Responding for the Government, Health Minister Dr Daniel Poulter praised the wider benefits of sharing health data such as the ability to better hold health care providers to account and empowering patients with the right data “to take greater control over their health care” and argued integration is dependent on “join[ing] up the information that informs what good care looks like” as is improving the care for people with co-morbidity and long-term conditions, especially when it came to implementing the Francis Report.

[Click here for more information](#)

Specialised Services announce three new Clinical Reference Group (CRG) Chairs

Specialised Services has announced the appointment of three new Clinical Reference Group (CRG) Chairs, including Dr Mathias Radatz for Stereotactic Radiosurgery. This Clinical Reference Group (CRG) covers stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) and stereotactic radiotherapy (SRT). SRS and SRT are methods of delivering precisely targeted radiotherapy treatment delivered by Gamma Knife, Cyberknife, or any other linear accelerator-based technology.

[Click here for more information](#)

National Patient Safety Alerting System

The new [National Patient Safety Alerting System \(NPSAS\)](#), a vital tool that NHS England will use to ensure warnings of potential risks to the safety of patients can be swiftly developed and disseminated to every corner of the NHS, has been launched.

The NPSAS has been launched to strengthen the rapid dissemination of urgent patient safety alerts to healthcare providers via the [Central Alerting System \(CAS\)](#). This three-stage alerting system also provides useful educational and implementation resources to support providers to put appropriate measures in place to prevent harm and encourage and share best practice in patient safety.

[Click here for more information](#)

Care needs: financial services industry to develop products to help people plan

A [Compact Agreement](#) has been developed by the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) and NHS England to ensure effective partnership working between ABPI members and the specialised services Clinical Reference Groups.

The Agreement highlights a number of commitments from both parties which will enable them to collaborate and drive the delivery of high quality treatments and services to patients in specialised services.

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Lords question inequality in cancer treatment for older people

The Lords saw a session of Oral Questions on equal access to NHS cancer treatment. Labour Peer Baroness Pitkeathley, referencing Macmillan research, asked what the government was doing to address the “blatant ageism” she sees in the decision not to treat thousands of older people due to their age. Responding for the Government, Earl Howe, The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health said that he completely agreed, and that “a series of reports has shown that the NHS has too often failed to provide the best possible services to older people. We cannot save lives without tackling inequalities.”

Later, when questioned on the role of commissioning in reducing the barriers to older people’s cancer treatments Earl Howe mentioned the work the Government, Macmillan and Age UK had done together in 2012 to improve uptake of treatment in older people, and that NHS England are currently working to increase the uptake of chemotherapy in older age groups.

[Click here for more information](#)

Burnham’s speech damns NHS Reforms

Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham suggested in a speech on Monday that government policy had left the NHS “fragile” and caused “a seemingly permanent A&E crisis.” Reforms, he argued, had led to a loss of focus, financial wastage and an increased “post code lottery.” He also claimed more privatisation has been proven to be the “explicit aim” of the government’s NHS reforms. A Labour government, Mr Burnham suggested, would freeze energy prices to create healthier living environments, use the NHS underspend to fund social care and stop competition law from preventing health bodies from taking a collaborative approach to care.

[Click here for more information](#)

MPs debate the NHS

At an Opposition Day Debate on Wednesday, MPs discussed NHS, and particularly A&E, performance. Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham suggested an ongoing “A&E crisis” was indicative of wider failures of government healthcare policy. Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt responded by denying A&E was in crisis and commenting that A&E departments were hitting their 4 hour waiting time target more often than they had under Labour. More generally there was dispute between Labour and Conservative members regarding the responsibility for marketisation the NHS. Both Barbara Keeley (Labour) and Jim Shannon (DUP) referenced Macmillan calls directly when speaking in the debate.

[Click here for more information](#)

Hunt speech lauds positive culture change in the NHS

In a speech marking one year since the publication of the Francis report, Secretary of State for Health Jeremy Hunt told a conference on Wednesday that care in the NHS had improved owing to a “a real shift in priorities,” with “compassionate care replacing tick box targets.” Specific improvements identified by Mr Hunt included 2400 more nurses, 20% more whistleblowers, 40% of patients having a named responsible doctor in hospital and more direct patient feedback through the Friends and Family Test.

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CCG Running Costs Allowances 2014/15 & 2015/16

Following the NHS England Board meeting on 17 December 2013, NHS England have now published CCG running cost allowances for 2014-15 and indicative running cost allowances for 2015/16 for planning purposes. The figures outlined here in the running costs translate to per head allowances of £24.73 (2014-2015) and £22.07 (2015-2016).

A letter regarding CCG running costs allowances 2014/15 & 2015/16 has been sent to CCGs and a document on the calculation of running cost allowances has also been published.

[Click here for more information](#)

The Francis Report: One Year On

In the year since the publication of the Francis Report NHS England has led many significant improvements to address the concerns raised in this landmark report.

Some improvements over the last year include:

- a review of the quality of care and treatment provided by 14 hospital trusts that are persistent outliers on mortality indicators, developing a new patient-centred approach to investigation that has been taken on by the CQC;
- development of a network of Patient Safety Collaboratives
- launching of the National Patient Safety Alerting System (NPSAS) which will ensure warnings of emerging risks can be rapidly issued.

NHS England, together with CCGs, will by April 2014 set out a national level of ambition to increase the proportion and consistency of good experiences of care and reduce the proportion of poor experiences. We worked with patients and patient groups to improve the feedback we get from vulnerable patients and encourage the widespread adoption of evidence-based improvements to experiences of care.

[Click here for more information](#)

NHS England releases update to national Cancer Drugs Fund list

NHS England has released an update to the national Cancer Drugs Fund list, further increasing access for patients to an additional three new cancer drugs.

The additions to the list have been made following a review of trial data from the drugs by the Chemotherapy Clinical Reference Group (CRG), one of 74 such groups which provide clinical advice to NHS England regarding a range of specialised services.

The additions, which are all targeted drugs for specific cancers, are:

- Trastuzumab Emtansine: for patients with breast cancer
- Radium-223 Dichloride: for patients with prostate cancer

- Dabrafenib: for patients with unresectable or metastatic melanoma

No drugs were removed from the list.

The Chemotherapy CRG is working closely with clinicians and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry to ensure a rapid review process for new drugs that may be appropriate for inclusion on the Cancer Drugs Fund list. The review process looks at the available evidence regarding a drug's efficacy, plus data relating to its safety.

[Click here for more information](#)

Public Health Outcomes Framework

Release of the Public Health Outcomes Framework: February 2014 quarterly data update.

The Public Health Outcomes Framework examines indicators that help us understand trends in public health.

[Click here for more information](#)

1 in 3 breast cancers are in women over 70

New national Be Clear on Cancer campaign targets older women to increase early diagnoses of breast cancer.

One in 3 women diagnosed with breast cancer in England each year are aged 70 or over. This age group also accounts for more than half of all breast cancer deaths annually, latest figures show. This age group also accounts for more than half of all breast cancer deaths annually, latest figures show.

This comes as Public Health England launches a new national Be Clear on Cancer campaign to remind older women 'don't assume you're past it', and to visit their doctor if they spot any changes in their breasts.

[Click here for more information](#)

Care Bill Committee members support free social care at end of life

The Care Bill Committee debated a Clause to the Bill that would give a Government power to introduce free social care at the end of life and advance care planning. Conservative MPs Sarah Wollaston and Sarah Newton and Liberal Democrat MP Paul Burstow all spoke strongly in favour of free social care at the end of life. The Labour Opposition also spoke supportively of the policy.

Responding, Norman Lamb said that he is not in a position to commit the Government, but spoke of his determination to introduce free social care at the end of life. He said "I am determined that we do this. Obviously, I want to see the evidence and we have to be aware of the financial consequences, but I am determined that that will happen. The current situation is very hard to justify, particularly given that we are spending money on caring for people where they do not want to be... I am not in a position to commit the

Government, but, as the responsible Minister—indeed, I have some degree of influence over the decision making—I am determined that we achieve that objective”

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Calls for a Male HPV vaccine to curb rise in Oral Cancer

Sir Paul Beresford MP, a dentist by profession opened a short debate on Oral Cancer in the Commons by saying that incidences of mouth cancer are rising quickly with “now 35% more new cases a year than 30 years ago”. He focused on low public awareness, late diagnosis and the role of lifestyle factors such as drinking and smoking, but his main point was to question HPV vaccination policy. He highlighted that whilst England vaccinates only girls for HPV, Australia vaccinates both men and women, which Sir Paul argued is producing herd immunity. He put it to the Minister that it was “not fair, ethical or socially responsible” to not also vaccinate men for HPV.

Responding, Public Health Minister Jane Ellison restated the Government’s “commitment to making England among the best in Europe in improving all cancer outcomes”. She said that the uptake of HPV vaccination in school age girls has been very high, and that the Government believes this will reduce cervical cancer rates (the “primary purpose” of the programme) but also reduce transmission to men. She said however that a committee as of October last year was considering the vaccination of adolescent boys, and men who have sex with men.

[Click here for more information](#)

CCG Outcomes Indicator Set

NHS England has released an at-a-glance guide setting out the CCG Outcomes Indicator Set for 2014/15. The new set of indicators have been selected on the basis they help contribute to better outcomes across the five domains of the NHS Outcomes Framework and include early detection, diagnosis via emergency routes and, record of stage at diagnosis, for cancer. In addition to these general cancer indicators, there are tumour specific indicators for Lung and Breast cancer. Last year’s indicator on 5 year cancer survival rates, however, has been removed from the set.

[Click here for more information](#)

Treating patients as people – Jeremy Hunt Speech

Secretary of State for Health Jeremy Hunt has outlined his plans for ‘whole stay doctors’ in a speech this week. Reinforcing compassionate and continuous care as a priority for the NHS in the wake of Mid Staffs, ‘whole stay doctors’ will be accountable for an entire inpatient care plan and responsible for dealing with the main cause of admission. This named and accountable doctor would also be responsible for the proper handover to a named and accountable GP on discharge. The Academy of Royal Medical Colleges will publish guidance to support hospitals to take forward best practice in March

[Click here for more information](#)

More being done to improve earlier diagnosis shows research by PHE's National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN)

More than half (57%) of around 25,000 newly diagnosed cases of Cancer of Unknown Primary (CUP) in England between 2006 and 2010 presented as an emergency compared to 23% for all cancers, shows new research by Public Health England's National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN). The 1-year survival rates for all CUP patients included in the Routes to Diagnosis study is 16%, which is low compared to most other cancer types and CUP tumours presenting as an emergency - including from A&E or emergency referral from a GP - have the lowest survival of all the routes to diagnosis.

People are recorded as having Cancer of Unknown Primary if the primary site of the cancer growth cannot be established or if the tumour has been registered without specification of site.

[Click here for more information](#)

NHS England announces new chair of its Clinical Priorities Advisory Group

Sir Nick Partridge has been announced as the chair to NHS England's Clinical Priorities Advisory Group (CPAG). Sir Nick has been interim chair of CPAG since September 2013 and after a rigorous application process and interview round at the end of 2013, Sir Nick accepted the appointment following ratification from Sir Bruce Keogh, NHS England's Medical Director.

[Click here for more information](#)

Northern Ireland

Debunking the myths about cancer

It's time to debunk the myths about cancer; that was the message from Health Minister Edwin Poots on 4 February 2014 as he marks World Cancer Day.

The Minister was speaking ahead of an event at Queen's University, hosted by Northern Ireland Cancer Research Consumer Forum, to promote World Cancer Day.

Mr Poots said: "The theme of this year's World Cancer Day is 'Debunk the Myths'. It is important that we all talk about cancer; understand that often there are signs or symptoms of cancer that we should not ignore; know that there are effective treatments for cancer and be willing and quick to discuss concerns with our doctors to get treatment as early as possible."

The Forum brings together patients and carers affected by cancer, to work in partnership with researchers to influence cancer research and contribute a consumer perspective to research being conducted across Northern Ireland and beyond.

[Click here for more information](#)

Emergency Care Waiting Time Statistics (October – December 2013)

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has published statistics on the time spent waiting in emergency care departments within Northern Ireland during the months of October, November and December 2013.

Between October and December 2013 the percentage of patients attending Type 1 emergency care departments that were either treated and discharged home or admitted within four hours decreased from 77.5% to 72.5%; for Type 2 emergency care departments the figures decreased from 88.2% to 87.3%; and for Type 3 the figure remained at 100.0%. The number of patients that waited longer than 12 hours to be either treated and discharged home, or admitted, more than doubled, from 77 to 168.

[Click here for more information](#)

Scotland

Protecting Scotland's NHS

In a letter to the Health Committee, Mr Neil highlighted that the UK Government's own assessment of the impact of their reforms to NHS England could amount to a reduction in UK health spending of more than £1 billion a year.

Under the current funding system, that could see Scotland lose out on £100 million every year to spend on public services like health.

[Click here for more information](#)

Scots back tobacco marketing ban

Most Scots remain unaware of the huge death toll caused by smoking — but they back a ban on tobacco marketing anyway.

Only around a fifth of 393 adults surveyed in Scotland knew that there are 100,000 deaths as a result of smoking every year in the UK.

[Click here for more information](#)

Enhancing Access to New Medicines

It has been announced that Scotland's systems for approving and accessing new medicines for use in the NHS is to see a step change later this year. From May 2014 patients and clinicians will be given a greater say on what new medicines are approved by the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) for use in the NHS for end of life care and treating very rare conditions.

The SMC has outlined how they plan to transform their drug approval through the introduction of a new Patient and Clinician Engagement (PACE) meeting to give patient groups and clinicians a stronger voice in SMC decisions for life-limiting and rare conditions.

The SMC believe that these changes could benefit up to 1,500 patients by getting access to newly licensed medicines in the first year of their operation.

[Click here for more information](#)

Peers vote to legislate against smoking in cars with children

Respiratory health professionals call on MPs to vote to ban smoking in cars with children.

Second hand exposure to tobacco smoke is a major cause of ill-health in children. Smoke inhalation damages the developing lung and The Royal College of Physicians estimate that each year in the UK it is responsible for 300,000 primary care contacts, 9,500 hospital admissions, at least 200 cases of bacterial meningitis, and about 40 sudden infant deaths. Most of this additional burden of disease falls on the more disadvantaged children in society and all of it is avoidable. There is a strong consensus that children need to be protected from unnecessary hazards, that exposing children to tobacco smoke is unacceptable and that removing this exposure is effective.

[Click here for more information](#)

Global battle against cancer won't be won with treatment alone

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, is today (3 February 2014) launching World Cancer Report 2014, a collaboration of over 250 leading scientists from more than 40 countries, describing multiple aspects of cancer research and control.

Based on the latest statistics on trends in cancer incidence and mortality worldwide, this new book reveals how the cancer burden is growing at an alarming pace and emphasizes the need for urgent implementation of efficient prevention strategies to curb the disease.

“Despite exciting advances, this Report shows that we cannot treat our way out of the cancer problem,” states Dr Christopher Wild, Director of IARC and co-editor of the book. “More commitment to prevention and early detection is desperately needed in order to complement improved treatments and address the alarming rise in cancer burden globally.”

[Click here for more information](#)

Increase in NHS funding

Real terms increase for territorial health boards.

Territorial health boards across Scotland are to benefit from a 3.1 per cent increase in funding, it was announced today.

All health boards are to share £9.330 billion in revenue funding in 2014-15, with territorial boards being given an increase of £248 million for 2014-15.

This is a real terms increase of one per cent above inflation for all territorial health boards.

Over £370 million will also be invested in improving NHS buildings and equipment in 2014-15.

This funding boost reflects the Scottish Government's pledge to protect health spending and to invest in frontline services.

[Click here for more information](#)

Personal Independence Payment rolls out to existing claimants in Scotland

The reassessment of existing claimants of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is underway in Scotland, as the roll out of a replacement benefit– Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – continues.

From 13th January 2014 existing DLA claimants in Dumfries and Galloway, Edinburgh, Galashiels and Motherwell are invited to claim PIP if there is a change in their care or mobility needs, their fixed term award is due to expire, or the claimant turns 16. New features of PIP include a face-to-face assessment for most claimants and regular reviews, both of which were missing under DLA.

[Click here for more information](#)

NHS Scotland to reduce private sector use

Health Secretary Alex Neil has issued new guidance to all health boards making it clear that the vast majority of patients should be treated within NHSScotland. Recent figures show that NHS spending in Scotland in 2012/13 for independent healthcare in order to meet waiting list targets was around £28 million, which is 0.8 per cent of the overall budget

The funding in Scotland is already lower than the percentage of public sector spending on private healthcare in England, which was 9.5 per cent in 2011/12.

[Click here for more information](#)

Carers' Consultation Launched

Carers and young carers are being asked for their views on specific legislation to promote, defend and extend their rights. The widespread consultation marks a significant step forward in recognising and addressing the needs of unpaid adult carers and young carers across Scotland who care for their families, friends and neighbours.

The proposed legislation, which was announced by the First Minister in October, aims to ensure that carers are further supported and are fully involved in decisions affecting their lives and those they care for.

[Click here for more information](#)

Wales

Historic social services debate continues

The second of two five-hour debates on the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill took place on February 11th.

This bill aims to transform how social care is delivered in Wales and is an opportunity to change people's lives for the better. It is the largest and most complex law ever considered by the National Assembly.

[Click here for more information](#)

'Together for Health – a cancer delivery plan' annual report

The 2013 annual report for Wales' cancer delivery plan 'Together for Health' has been published. Together for Health – a cancer delivery plan sets out the Welsh Government's vision for cancer services in Wales until 2016 and was published in July 2012. The annual report shows the progress made and identifies areas for future improvement, and is part of the commitment of the Welsh Government to deliver a more accountable and visible NHS for the people of Wales.

[Click here for more information](#)

Welsh Cancer Patient Experience

The Welsh cancer patient experience survey published this week has reported the views of 7,352 cancer patients – 89% of which rated their care as either excellent or very good. The survey showed very positive experience of aspects of care including that 85% said they were always treated with respect and dignity by staff, 87% had confidence and trust in the doctors and nurses caring for them and 94% said they had enough privacy when being treated.

Importantly, the survey has also highlighted areas of care which need improvement, particularly variation between hospital sites and cancer types, consistency of access, and the provision of financial information by hospital staff.

[Click here for more information](#)

Report shows further progress in cancer care in Wales

Wales has the biggest increase in cancer survival rates in the UK, a Welsh Government report published on 3 February shows.

The second annual report charting progress against the aims of the Welsh Government's cancer strategy shows progress in several areas of cancer care in Wales, including:

- The biggest improvement in cancer survival in the UK;
- The 31 day target for patients who were newly diagnosed with cancer not via the Urgent route has been reached consistently since July 2013;
- An increase in the uptake of the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine (HPV), with levels in 2012/13 at 86.6%;
- A 5% increase in recruitment to clinical trials;
- The completion of a cancer patient experience survey, which shows 89% of cancer patients think their care is excellent or very good.

[Click here for more information](#)

Review of the advisory structure for health in Wales

Minister for Health and Social Services (Mark Drakeford) has launched a three month call for evidence on the current [advisory structure of health bodies](#) in Wales. The review will help determine what reforms are necessary to make the system more efficient and effective, and will include the statutory advisory committees to the Welsh Government such as the Welsh Medical Committee, the National Specialist Advisory Groups and Local Health Professional Forums. A [written statement](#) accompanied this news story.

[Click here for more information](#)

Monthly cancer waiting time statistics

The latest set of monthly statistics on patients who have been newly diagnosed with cancer and started definitive treatment has been released on StatsWales. Some of the key findings include that 92% of patients newly diagnosed with cancer via the Urgent Suspected Cancer route started definitive treatment within the target time of 62 days. Of those diagnosed with cancer not via the Urgent route, 98.6% started definitive treatment within the 31 day target.

[Click here for more information](#)

Developments from NICE

From 1 April 2014 we will be inviting comments and feedback from stakeholders and the public on the new manual for developing NICE guidelines.

Consultation dates: 1 April – 30 June 2014

Teams across NICE have been working together to create a single manual for the development of clinical, public health and social care guidelines. This new manual will harmonise the processes of the different centres developing guidelines, incorporating new ways of working to improve the process, and will also increase transparency by documenting the rationale for use of different methods. The manual for developing NICE guidelines will be implemented in January 2015.

We will email all registered stakeholders across NICE work programmes, and members of current NICE guideline development Committees, details of the consultation and how to respond when the consultation goes live. Details of the consultation will also be posted on the NICE website. We recommend that if your organisation is registered as a stakeholder, you submit collated comments from your organisation.

If you have any questions about the manual for developing NICE guidelines or public consultation process, please contact nice@nice.org.uk

Cancer patients diagnosed quicker, thanks to NICE guidelines

The time taken to diagnose certain common cancers, from the point when a patient first reports a possible symptom to their GP, fell in adults by an average of five days, following the launch of NICE guidelines on cancer referral.

Researchers found that the average time it took to be diagnosed for a range of common cancers combined fell from 125 days in 2001/2002 to 120 days in 2007/2008.

Overall, there was a reduction in the time taken from first presentation to diagnosis for 15 cancers.

[Click here for more information](#)

NICE calls on local government to boost physical activity

Local government can improve the health and wellbeing of their communities, and save money in the long-term, by encouraging people to be more physically active, says NICE.

Last week, new research revealed that in certain parts of the country rates of physical inactivity have reached "pandemic" levels.

The research, published in a report by [ukactive](#), found that in some areas up to 40 per cent of the adult population can be classed as inactive, with 12.4 million failing to raise their heart levels for more than 30 minutes a week.

The figures raised concerns, as physical inactivity is known to increase the risk of developing long-term conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer. It is also [known to decrease](#) a persons life by up to five years.

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