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## West of Scotland Primary Care Cancer Network Regional Newsletter

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### Winter 2024-2025

This newsletter is intended to summarise current primary care cancer issues at national and regional levels. We will also highlight regional progress on the [Cancer Strategy](#) and [Action plan](#) relevant for primary care. Previous newsletters are on the [WoSCAN](#) website.

#### Scottish Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer 2025

These [guidelines](#) are due to be published in Spring 2025. This includes a new guideline for Non-specific symptoms. The next edition of this newsletter will highlight key changes, and further educational support will be developed. The draft guidance is out for wider stakeholder review. It is important primary care clinicians engage in this review to help ensure guidance is relevant to everyday practice. For further details, please contact [srg2024review@nhs.scot](mailto:srg2024review@nhs.scot)

#### Lung Cancer

Artificial Intelligence has been used to prioritise CXR reporting in GG&C reducing time for reporting suspected cancer on CXR from 184 to 1.8 hours. Direct escalation to CT Chest was then arranged in the GG&C model. A similar pilot has been completed in Grampian.

A lung cancer screening trial LungScot has also been completed. Modelling approximates 800 (mainly early stage) lung cancers would be detected annually in Scotland.

Both have been paused for evaluation and business cases for national adoption to be submitted in 2025.

#### Skin Cancer

Digital Dermatology ([supporting materials](#)) has been developed to enable IG compliant process to attach images of skin to dermatology referrals. This enables vetting ensuring patients

are on right pathways. Roll out across Scotland planned over next few months. National dermatology clinical pathways have also been updated and are available on the [Right Decision Service](#).

#### Prostate Cancer pathway & follow up

The [“Filters & cascades” pathway](#) for vetting has been adopted in GG&C. This has reduced median time to first appointment from 40 to 2 days and, for metastatic disease, compliance with 62-day target increased from 16.6 to 87.5%. Similar projects being considered in other areas.

Digital Prostate follow-up is being rolled out across WoSCAN. PSA is ordered and reviewed by cancer teams with phlebotomy done locally. The digital app communicates results and facilitates patients to raise concerns or arrange appointments with urology team if required.

#### Chemoprevention for Breast Cancer

New [chemoprevention](#) medications have been approved for use in Scotland for patients at risk of breast cancer. A pathway for identification, assessment and initiation is in development. Refer to [Genetics Service](#) guidance meantime.

#### Optimal diagnostic pathways

Pathways for [Lung](#) and [Head & Neck](#) have been developed & implementation is ongoing. Colorectal optimal pathway is in development. Patient self-referral pathways have also been piloted. (e.g. breast [lump self-referral pilot](#) in NHS FV).

### **GP ST Training: Cancer**

We are working with NES to develop a regular programme of national GP ST training including webinars, bite-sized sessions and workshops. Further details will follow.

**Gateway C** is the free [early cancer diagnostic resource](#) supported by NHS Education for Scotland. In addition to specific cancer modules, there are podcasts, webinars and documentary style videos covering all aspects of current and emerging cancer care. It is relevant for all primary care clinicians.

**Malignant Spinal Cord Compression** is an oncological emergency requiring immediate management. Updated guidance can be found in the [Scottish Palliative Care Guidelines](#). Patients require urgent steroid and admission to local hospital for urgent MRI scanning.

### **Cervical Cancer & Screening**

The recent screening programme incident where small number of people who had been removed from cervical screening following subtotal hysterectomy (< 5) were diagnosed with cervical cancer. Practices may be asked to review "not for recall" status where no reason has been identified during the audit process. Practices affected will receive detailed guidance. January is cervical cancer awareness month. A [practical guide](#) to help addressing inequalities, as well as other resources, are available on the Inequalities Health in Action in GP [teams channel](#).

### **Primary Care Cancer Data**

We continue to try to provide useable data for primary care. Public Health Scotland have developed a [USC dashboard](#). This is updated monthly. The data is currently incomplete, however, we plan to share a summary

of the data available in future newsletters. The live interactive dashboard is hosted in the User Access System under the [Scottish Cancer Registry and Intelligence Service](#).

### **Useful resources**

The [Beatson Cancer Charity](#) believes no one should go through cancer alone. They provide a range of wellbeing services at 8 satellite centres including practical, psychological financial and employment supports. In addition, they offer a [bereavement support](#) service.

The **Beatson Cancer Treatment Helpline 0141 301 7990** provides access to specialist oncology advice for patients on, or within 6 weeks of, treatment at the Beatson. It is manned by [Acute Oncology Assessment Unit \(AOAU\)](#) nursing staff, **8am to 8pm 7 days a week**. Out with these hours, calls go to the NHS 24 National Cancer Treatment Helpline.

**Cancer Research UK [Talk Cancer](#)** programme can help train practice staff to become confident in speaking to patients about cancer, for example, encouraging screening uptake.

**Prehabilitation** currently starts at diagnosis and is delivered by Maggie's Centres. Patients may benefit from signposting to the [prehab website](#) or a more generic "[waiting well](#)" NHS Scotland resource following referral.

**Improving the Cancer Journey** service delivers a holistic needs assessment with support, particularly for psycho-social issues. Referral via local pathways and is particularly helpful at diagnosis as part of a "[cancer care review](#)".

Keep up to date with **Cancer Research UK newsletters**. These include key Cancer updates for GPs, early detection and research newsletters.

*If you have any queries about primary care cancer issues, please contact us:*  
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