

# Alliance Newsletter

*Connecting and empowering the delivery of cancer care across our communities.*

**Issued Monday 2 June 2025**

## A message from Ruth Carr, Managing Director of SWAG Cancer Alliance



### **New Executive Chair appointed**

We are pleased to welcome Kevin McNamara, Chief Executive of Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as the new Executive Chair for the SWAG Cancer Alliance, effective from 1 April. We are very grateful to Maria Kane for the time, dedication, and leadership she brought to the role of Executive Chair over the past few years. As we welcome Kevin McNamara, we look forward to continuing the great work of the Cancer Alliance under

his guidance and vision. The SWAG core team will continue to be hosted by North Bristol NHS Trust.

### **Annual Plan approved**

Our Annual Plan has been officially approved by NHS England at both regional and national levels. The plan was praised for its ambition and the clarity of its improvement initiatives, which span a wide range of priorities - from enabling earlier and faster diagnosis, to improving access to timely treatment, reducing variation in care, and supporting people living with and beyond cancer. We now look ahead to the upcoming 10-Year Health Plan and the National Cancer Plan, expected later this year.

### **Cancer performance milestones achieved**

One of our main priorities as a Cancer Alliance is to reduce waiting times for patients. We are proud to report that we have exceeded both national cancer performance targets for 2024/25:

- Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS): 78.4% (target: 77%)
- 62-Day Urgent Referral to First Treatment: 72.7% (target: 70%)

This marks the second consecutive year of meeting these key performance goals. Our focus now shifts to achieving even more ambitious targets for 2025/26:

- FDS: 80%
- 62-Day Standard: 75%

These achievements reflect the hard work and dedication of all teams involved in cancer services across the region.

## Future spotlight features

Throughout our newsletters, we aim to keep you updated on our progress against key national and local priorities. We also take pride in shining a spotlight on members of our team and our valued partners - celebrating their contributions, increasing visibility, and sharing the good news stories that inspire and connect us all. If you would like to share a story, please contact [swagca@nbt.nhs.uk](mailto:swagca@nbt.nhs.uk).

Thank you,



**Ruth Carr**  
Managing Director, SWAG Cancer Alliance

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## Bringing teledermatology to life across the region

The SWAG Cancer Alliance is expanding the use of teledermatology to improve diagnosis of skin cancer. This allows consultants to assess high-quality images of skin lesions remotely, reducing the need for patients to attend hospital appointments.

Patients referred by their GP will be invited to a local imaging hub, where trained staff will take images using specialist cameras. A consultant will then review these and decide whether to discharge the patient, request a follow-up, or book a procedure.

Early pilots show a 60–70% drop in face-to-face appointments, improving patient experience and freeing up clinical time. Trusts across the region are adopting the approach at different stages, and we'll be sharing progress as it continues.

### Meeting demand and improving access

Urgent skin cancer referrals have risen 170% since 2021, and dermatology waiting lists are up 82%. Teledermatology provides a quicker, more efficient way to manage demand, especially when many referrals are found to be benign. SWAG-funded pilots show reduced in-person visits without compromising care quality.

### Understanding the Value: York Health Economics Evaluation

To assess the full impact, the York Health Economics Consortium (YHEC) is analysing data from pilot sites and past evaluations. Their model will estimate costs and benefits compared to traditional care.

SWAG is helping YHEC access key data to give local systems a clearer view of what works best, supporting better commissioning and outcomes for patients and services.

[Read more](#)



## Cancer Care Map



The Cancer Care Map is a free online resource designed to help people across the UK find cancer support services. It is run by the Richard Dimbleby Cancer Fund and currently lists more than 5,500 verified services.

Each listing is carefully checked before it is added and reviewed every three months to ensure the information remains accurate and up to date. The resource is embedded into several platforms

including the SWAG Cancer Alliance website, so that the information is available wherever people search for support.

In 2024, Cancer Care Map launched its first formal partnership with SWAG Cancer Alliance. This collaboration built on earlier work by a member of the SWAG Patient and Public Voice Group, who created a local library of support services.

As a result of this partnership, a localised version of Cancer Care Map now sits directly on the [SWAG Cancer Alliance website](#), making it easier than ever for people to find the help and support they need, close to home.

If you'd like to add a service or update existing information, please contact the team directly at: [SWAG@cancercaremap.org](mailto:SWAG@cancercaremap.org).

[SWAG Cancer Care Map](#)

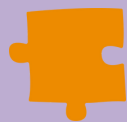


## SWAG Lung Cancer Screening programme showcased at Westminster



On 8<sup>th</sup> May, Dr Anna Bibby was invited to present at 'Inside Healthcare' – a stakeholder engagement meeting held at Portcullis House, Westminster. The purpose of the meeting was to highlight the findings of the [National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcomes and Deaths \(NCEPOD\) 2024](#) report into prison healthcare.

Anna presented the work undertaken by the [SWAG Lung Cancer Screening programme](#) which delivered screening to men within HMP Leyhill in Gloucestershire. The meeting was attended by the Shadow Minister for Justice, Dr Kieran Mullen, and the MP for Wells and Mendip Hills, Tessa Munt, who also sits on the Commons Select Committee for Justice. Anna's presentation was well-received and generated discussion around the ageing prison population, and the challenges of ensuring ongoing medical care provision within the prison service, and subsequently, upon release.



## RUH Bath trialling new digital tool to speed up diagnosis and treatment

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust (RUH) is one of two trusts to be using a new digital tool called Cancer 360 to help speed up cancer diagnosis and treatment. It's part of the NHS's Federated Data Platform (FDP) and is designed to reduce delays and improve outcomes for people with cancer.

Cancer 360 brings together important patient information, like test results, appointments, and treatment plans, into one easy-to-use dashboard for clinicians. This helps teams make faster, better-informed decisions about patient care.

So far, it's being used for four types of cancer, with more to be added soon. As more staff and tumour sites start using the tool, it's expected to bring even greater benefits. RUH is working closely with NHS England and tech partner Palantir to improve Cancer 360 and help evaluate how well it works. This will support future improvements and a wider rollout.

The NHS Faster Diagnosis Programme is now inviting other Trusts to explore using Cancer 360. To find out more, email: [england.fdp@nhs.net](mailto:england.fdp@nhs.net).

[Find out more](#)



## Other Stories

### Faster Diagnosis Learn & Share Workspace

We are excited to launch the SWAG Cancer Alliance Faster Diagnosis Share & Learn workspace, showcasing best practices and innovative ideas from Cancer Alliances across England.

Join us in inspiring others—record a short video or share a successful team story to help spread valuable insights across the cancer care community.

[Find out more.](#)

### Cancer Research UK GP Bowel Screening Tool

Cancer Research UK have recently released a "GP Bowel Screening Tool".

This tool compares predicted cancer screening coverage based on local socio-demographic factors, with actual rates across GP practices in England. It helps identify areas where coverage is higher or lower than expected, supporting targeted efforts to improve uptake.

[Find out more.](#)

# Welcome to our new Communications & Engagement Manager

We're thrilled to welcome our new Communications and Engagement Manager at the SWAG Cancer Alliance - Penny Heaton.

Penny will be leading our communications and strengthening engagement across the region.

[See LinkedIn.](#)



## Events and Resources

### Support Learners in Clinical Practice Study Day

19 June 2025 | 09:00 - 16:30

This study day is designed for multi-professional healthcare workers and is open to registered healthcare professionals, support staff, and anyone interested in enhancing their practice around creating a safe and supportive learning environment. [Buy ticket.](#)

### Macmillan Community of Practice launch

16 July 2025 | 13:30 - 14:30, MS Teams

Macmillan is launching a UK-wide Community of Practice (CoP) for GPs and GP trainees - offering expert-led discussions, peer learning, and support.

Open to all UK GPs and trainees.

[Email Catherine Williams from Macmillan Cancer Support for more info on how to join.](#)

### Lung Cancer Screening Roadshows

27 June - Taunton

28 June - Chippenham

29 June - Gloucester

30 June - Bristol

Locations TBC

Aimed at residents aged 55-74 and their family members who want to learn more about lung cancer screening. Please check our website or LinkedIn for further information coming soon.



## Get involved



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