

SWAG Cancer Alliance Newsletter

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

Issued Thursday 4 December 2025

Welcome to our December Newsletter



As we approach the end of the year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible progress we've made together throughout the year and thank you all for your continued support, dedication, and hard work.

It has been a busy November. This month we held our second Clinical Leadership Forum, bringing together clinicians in leadership roles from across our region and different professions, focused on how clinicians can make an impact through leadership. Our SWAG Innovates Together forum was launched with great interest and engagement from across the region.

We were also asked to share information regarding our Days Matter cancer challenge to support other cancer alliances across the country at the National Cancer Alliance Leadership forum.

This month's edition highlights some of the remarkable work happening across our Alliance, work that not only enhances clinical practice but also ensures patients receive the best possible care and support. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to these achievements.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and here's to 2026, with a new National Cancer Plan on the horizon, and a continued commitment in transforming cancer care across our communities.

Best wishes,
Ruth Carr
Managing Director



Leading the way in Lung Cancer Innovation, Awareness and Support



November marked Lung Cancer Awareness Month and we highlighted the incredible work of Suriya Kirkpatrick, Assistant Chief Nursing Officer for Genomics and Research at North Bristol NHS Trust. With over 30 years of experience and passion for patient-centred innovation, Suriya is leading national efforts to transform lung cancer care through:

- Digital self-management tools including the LungFit study, co-designed with patients and carers
- Mainstreaming genomics – developing frameworks for ctDNA testing to personalise treatment
- Championing equity – improving data quality to reduce inequalities in research and care

Her vision for the future? Digital tools embedded in routine care, genomic testing as standard, and a research-active nursing workforce.

[Read more](#)



SWAG Innovates Together



Growing Our Community of Curious, Brave Innovators

By Helen Winter, SWAG Clinical Director

On 13 November 2025 we launched something genuinely special: our very first SWAG Innovates Together Forum - a space for clinicians, managers, digital specialists,

patient partners and community organisations to come together with one shared ambition: to do things differently, together, for the benefit of people affected by cancer.

From the moment colleagues began introducing themselves, sharing emojis, innovative ideas, and even post-run energy, it was clear that this community is ready for something bold. This first forum was honest, optimistic, and deeply aligned with the direction set out in our new SWAG Innovation Strategy 2025–2028: building a culture of innovation, driving purpose-led change, and collaborating with integrity across our system. [Read more](#).

Our next SWAG Innovates Together Forum will be held on Thursday 12 February 2026. Sign up now: [SWAG Innovates Together Feb 2026](#)



Showcasing ACCEND at the UKONS Conference



The SWAG Cancer Alliance ACCEND team attended the UK Oncology Nursing Society Conference to celebrate the inspirational work happening in cancer nursing.

What is ACCEND?

The Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development programme is a national capability framework defining the skills and knowledge needed by the non-medical cancer workforce. At SWAG, ACCEND is led by Liina Haythornthwaite, supported by Practice Education Facilitators (PEFs) in each Trust.

Amanda Portal, ACCEND Practice Educational Facilitator at UHBW, showcased her work with a poster presentation.

The conference provided a fantastic opportunity to collaborate and share ideas ACCEND offers a powerful way for the cancer workforce to demonstrate knowledge and skills—ultimately improving patient care. SWAG is proud to support this national initiative.



Making a Difference: Cancer and Domestic Abuse



MAKING A DIFFERENCE Cancer and Domestic Abuse

Lucy Angell-John, SWAG Cancer and Domestic Abuse Trainer

NHS
Somerset, Wiltshire,
Avon and Gloucestershire
Cancer Alliance

A new animation created in collaboration with SWAG Cancer Alliance and UHBW's Medical Illustration team, Making a

difference, was created to share the experience of domestic abuse survivors who are also affected by cancer. It shares two survivors' experiences of abuse and highlights the more subtle signs that cancer professionals may pick up on. This animation is designed to be used as part of a training session; with the aim to build cancer professionals skills in identifying all forms of domestic abuse and being able to respond confidently, ensuring victim-survivors getting the support that they need. [Read more](#).

To find out more information on the SWAG Cancer and Domestic Abuse training, Lucy Angell John is hosting a short lunch and learn webinar on Wednesday 10 December at 12pm. Sign up here: [Domestic Abuse and Cancer - Lunch & Learn | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)



Other Stories

Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad (CVLP) Update



We were delighted to welcome Tony Timlin, our new Project Manager for SWAG's CVLP, at last month's Clinical Leadership Forum.

It was also great to see our Gloucestershire CVLP team given a special mention in the national CVLP Newsletter recently, after they were nominated for the Exceptional Contribution to Research, Teaching, Innovation or Quality Improvement Award at Cheltenham Hospital.

We have since secured a £50k Regional Research Delivery Network (RRDN) strategic award from the National Institute

for Health and Care Research (NIHR). This funding will accelerate CVLP delivery, expand capacity, and help us achieve the 150-day set-up ambition across SWAG. Our goal is a virtual CVLP research hub that will make us a key destination for cancer vaccines and next-generation immune-based therapies, as well as enabling us to deliver vaccines locally.

New trial: The ROSETTA Breast-01 Immunotherapy Clinical Trial

The Cancer Vaccine Launch Pad team are initiating the adoption of another trial to the CVLP: the ROSETTA Breast-01 (BNT327-05) immunotherapy clinical trial for previously untreated locally recurrent inoperable or metastatic triple negative breast cancer (TNBC) patients. This is in addition to the ROSETTA Lung-02 study for non-small cell lung cancer patients.

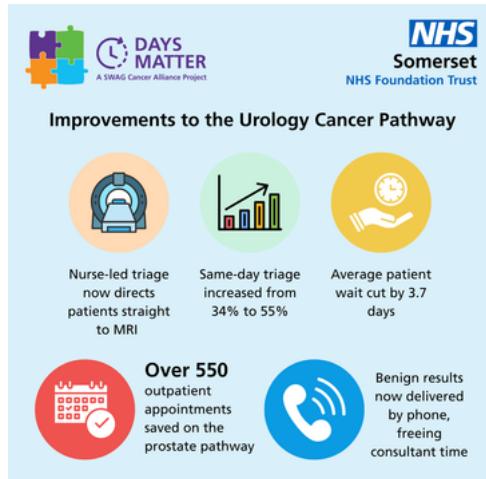
CVLP sites will be mobilised to screen potential patients for referral into the study, with the first site opening by March 2026. Please share this with any relevant breast cancer contacts within your network that may be interested in taking part.

Days Matter Spotlight: Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

As part of SWAG Cancer Alliance's Days Matter 100-day improvement programme, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust has transformed its urology cancer pathway, cutting delays and improving patient experience.

Read more on how they have increased same-day triage, cut average patient waiting times, and saved over 550 outpatient appointments on the prostate pathway.

[Read more.](#)





Events and Resources

Save the Date: SWAG Annual Conference is back for 2026!

We are excited to announce that our SWAG Cancer Alliance 2026 Annual Conference, dedicated this year to "Advances in Cancer Treatment and Care: Empower, Innovate, Improve" will be held on March 12th 2026.

The conference will bring together a diverse, multi-professional audience, including leading clinicians, researchers, patient advocates, commissioners, Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations and communities and healthcare innovators to explore cutting-edge treatments, breakthrough technologies, and collaborative strategies that make a real difference.

We will be sending out invites and sign-up links in the New Year - so watch this space!

National Cancer News

Cancer Research UK Webinars & Resources

Cancer Research UK have recently refreshed their [bowel cancer screening hub](#) for health professionals, including updates to the Good Practice Guide, and a new Bowel Grid tool which summarises evidence on interventions to address inequalities in bowel cancer screening uptake.

To hear more about inequalities in bowel cancer screening and the Bowel Grid tool, sign up to their webinar with NHS England on Monday 8 December from 10am – 11am here: [NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme Reducing Inequalities Webinar | NHS England Events](#)

The World's First Trial of a Vaccine to Prevent Lung Cancer

In a world-first clinical trial, Cancer Research UK scientists will begin testing an experimental vaccine designed to prevent lung cancer in people at high risk of the disease.

Lung cancer accounts for 20% of cancer deaths each year in the UK, and remains the leading cause of cancer deaths. Only 1 in 10 people diagnosed with lung cancer will survive longer than 10 years.

Now, researchers from the University of Oxford and University College London have developed a preventative vaccine called [LungVax](#), which has the potential to save lives by cutting people's lung cancer risk. Lab tests have shown it can prime the immune system to recognise and kill abnormal lung cells before they become cancerous.

Read more about this potentially life-saving innovative project [here](#).



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