



Cancer care services across Wakefield Primary Care Networks

July 2025

INTRODUCTION

Did you know there's a dedicated effort across Wakefield to improve cancer care and support for our residents?

Working Towards Better Health for Everyone

In Wakefield, we're focusing on tackling health inequalities, including those experienced by patients receiving cancer care.

OVERARCHING AIMS FOR CANCER SUPPORT

- Increasing the uptake of cancer screening
- Improving diagnosis rates of stage 1 and 2 cancers
- Improving the number of patients who survive for five years or more following their cancer diagnosis.
- Addressing health inequalities within cancer care
- Raising awareness and understanding of cancer screening processes
- Addressing hesitancy issues related to screening
- Providing information and support available to Cancer patients and carers
- Reducing stigma associated with cancer and screening
- Supporting cancer patients through care reviews

CANCER CARE REVIEWS



Cancer Care Reviews (CCR) should be conducted in primary care within 12 months of a patient's cancer diagnosis. The purpose of a CCR is to enhance the personalised care pathway for cancer patients and address their range of changing needs throughout their cancer journey. MacMillan Cancer care have set up a recommended 3 month review template for primary care. This initiates early discussions about diagnosis, treatment side effects, medication reviews, and support services.

This also aligns with the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) indicator CAN005.

Care Coordinators are involved in supporting cancer patients by completing both the 3-month and 12-month cancer care reviews.

Cancer reviews are addressed under the PCN Directed Enhanced Service (DES) for Early Cancer Diagnosis and the IIF (Investment & Impact Fund) continues to include a cancer indicator as part of two national metrics targeting inequalities and cancer.

The topics covered and information gathered during the comprehensive discussions held as part of the review.

These discussions cover:



Physical activity guidance



Treatment side effects



Medication reviews



Support services



Diagnosis and treatment plans



Potential consequences of treatment



Medication entitlements



Information needs of patients and carers

WHAT'S HAPPENING ACROSS THE DISTRICT

Local Primary Care Networks are running specific activities for patients.

- West Wakefield PCN: Ran a campaign in Lupset to boost cancer screening uptake, working with a creative agency called Magpie. Focus groups have been held to explore why people might not attend screening and what kind of messages would work best. Recommendations have been made based on learning such as using personalised invitations and offering flexible appointments. More detail can be found later in this analysis.
- Wakefield North: Recently held outreach days focusing on men's health and veterans' health, which included information on cancer screening and symptom awareness.
- Wakefield Health Alliance South: Outreach days are planned for later in the year, including one specifically focused on engaging the community about cancer. Monthly outreach clinics on the first Monday of every month, with information available on cancer screening are also in the pipeline. It is hoped that volunteers from Cancer Smart or Macmillan can attend these clinics.



WELLBEING
» **CAFÉ**

“COME AND JOIN US AT QUEENS MILL, CASTLEFORD”

4th Tuesday of every month
10.30am-12.30pm

Join us at Queen's Mill for a relaxed cuppa and a chat and meet our Health and Wellbeing Team

For more information contact:
Helen
Health and Wellbeing Coach
07543 315343
Queens Mill, Aire Street
Castleford, WF10 1JL

Wakefield North Primary Care Network NHS

Connecting people and improving the health and wellbeing of our community

BRINGING SUPPORT CLOSER TO HOME: WELLBEING CAFÉS IN WAKEFIELD NORTH

Since October 2024, Health and Wellbeing Coaches in the Wakefield North Primary Care Network have been hosting monthly Wellbeing Café sessions in Castleford.

These relaxed, community-based meet-ups offer local residents a chance to connect with others, share experiences, and link up with a wide range of support services. Attendees can be referred by their GP, local organisations or simply drop in on their own.

Each session focuses on a particular topic and includes an optional wellbeing walk, giving participants the chance to continue conversations and enjoy some gentle activity.

In May, the wellbeing cafe welcomed a volunteer from the Yorkshire Cancer Community, who shared his personal story to highlight the support available for people living with cancer. A key aim of the cafes is to bring together some of the voluntary sector and statutory services that help people with cancer, and other health conditions, to access support. Representatives from Live Well Wakefield, Step-Up employment support run by Wakefield Council, and Turning Point Therapies, attend the events, creating a truly joined-up support offer. For those with cancer this means discussions about financial advice, mental health support, as well as family and carer support.

For those who may be unwell, isolated, or without transport, these local cafés offer a vital opportunity to access help in a warm, welcoming setting right in the heart of their community.





Several roles are crucial in providing support to patients and their families and carers.



- **Care Coordinators:** These staff members play a key role in supporting cancer patients. They actively contact people who haven't responded to screening invitations to encourage them to attend. They also support patients by completing 3-month and 12-month cancer care reviews.



- **Lead Cancer Nurse (WHA South):** Angela Phillips recently took on this role and is involved in planning outreach clinics and training for staff on cancer and screening. She is also looking into carrying out cancer care reviews for practices in her area.



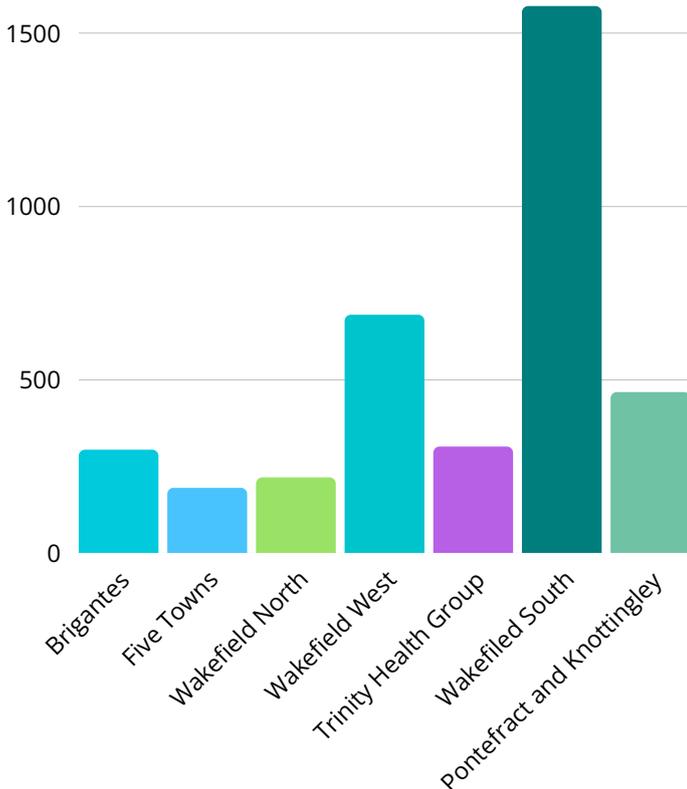
- **PCN Staff:** These teams are connecting with community groups and services, making it easier for patients to get referred to the support they need. They offer help in various ways, including face-to-face and pop-up sessions.



- **Volunteers:** There's hope that volunteers from Cancer Smart or Macmillan will be involved in supporting outreach activities.

CANCER CARE REVIEWS

Improving screening uptake is a major focus for PCNs in Wakefield. Teams within each of our PCNs have worked hard to deliver over 3,300 Cancer Care reviews between 1st June 2024 and 31st May 2025. You can see the breakdown per PCN below.



RESILIENCE ACADEMY TRAINING

The Wakefield Resilience Academy offers learning and training opportunities to health and care staff in Wakefield and beyond. It provides courses and certification that ensure compliance, embed the latest thinking and knowledge, best practice within primary care and ensure that Wakefield patients are treated with the dignity and care they deserve.

Specific cancer focused courses and learning sessions offered include:

- Cancer Care Review
- Prostate cancer update
- cancer screening update
- Gynaecological cancer update
- Cancer diagnosis and treatment - the patients journey

To find out more, contact: wycb-wak.conexusresilienceacademy@nhs.net



West Wakefield PCN Cancer Screening Campaign

Campaign Goal



- To increase the uptake of cancer screening, targeting patient groups experiencing the greatest health inequalities within the PCN.
- To directly contribute to the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Cancer Alliance objectives: improve diagnosis rates in stages 1 & 2, and improve the number of patients who survive for five years or more following their cancer diagnosis.

Campaign Approach



Based on two main workstreams:

- Creating health education resources (like videos) to improve understanding and address hesitancy, focusing on patient groups with health inequalities.
- Conducting outreach work (community-based clinics, engagement) to make screening more accessible by taking care closer to people's homes, especially targeting hard-to-reach groups.
- Implemented a specific campaign in Lupset in partnership with Magpie, a creative communications agency, to address community engagement and barriers to uptake.

Research methods



- Carried out 4 focus groups.
- Involved a total of 21 participants.
- Groups included a mix of respondents and non-respondents to screening invitations.

Research groups

- Cervical screening, age 25 - 64,
- Breast screening, age 50 - 70,
- Bowel screening, age 60 - 74,
- Mixed Cervical and Breast screening age 25 - 70



Key findings: Barriers and facilitators to screening uptake

Understanding Screening

- Confusion exists about what procedures actually count as cancer screening (e.g., some mentioned pap smears or breast exams without realising these are screening).
- Age eligibility is unclear for many, with participants noting that guidelines seem to change often.
- There is a strong request for clear, accessible information about screening.



Invitations & Appointments

- Letters are the usual method and are convenient but feel impersonal.
- Suggestions for more effective communication included text reminders and phone calls to encourage appointment attendance.
- Participants preferred having pre-booked appointments but with the flexibility to cancel if needed.
- A significant barrier is lack of workplace flexibility. Participants strongly recommended out-of-hours options like evening, weekend, and pop-up appointments to accommodate those working 9-5 jobs.

Visibility and promotion:



- Participants reported very little to no cancer screening advertising seen outside of healthcare settings.
- Suggested locations for more visible messaging included gyms, buses, hair salons, and supermarkets.
- Using local, trusted individuals or celebrities was suggested to improve awareness and help reduce stigma associated with cancer and screening.

Stigma

- Cancer and screening are described as a difficult, uncomfortable, and rarely discussed topic among friends and family.
- Participants felt it is important to open up conversations to increase uptake.
- Community events/groups where people could discuss these issues were welcomed as a way to normalise conversation and increase awareness.

Fear and anxiety

- Many assumed screenings would be physically painful or invasive, which discouraged attendance, particularly for cervical and breast screenings.
- Anxiety stems from uncertainty about the procedure itself and concern about the professionalism and care provided by staff.
- Past negative experiences during contributed to hesitation.



Personal experiences:

- Personal stories and experiences with cancer significantly motivated some participants to attend and advocate for screening.
- Sharing positive success stories of people who detected cancer early can help increase awareness and uptake.
- Framing screening as an empowering process was seen positively.

Recommendations for campaign materials & engagement:

Effective Tone & Approach



- Use personalised, multi-channel invitations including letters, texts, and phone calls, with reminders.
- Offer pre-scheduled appointments that are flexible.
- Implement community-based awareness and communications, potentially allowing people to go through the journey together.
- Utilise peer and celebrity-led advocacy to build trust and visibility.
- Provide accessible, stigma-reducing education.
- Improve patient experiences by offering reassurance, perhaps through letters detailing expectations, procedures, and processes.
- Ensure access to support for individuals with additional needs or special circumstances.
- Give special focus to men and hard-to-reach demographics who may face unique barriers.

Effective messaging & design:

- Personalisation matters: Messages should feel relevant and personal to the intended audience.
- Emphasise reassurance & encouragement, comfort, and clarity about the process.
- Designs should be clear, short, and informative – easy to read and understand.
- Avoid overcrowding text; too much text was found overwhelming.
- Include diverse representation of different people, including those with disabilities, which was appreciated by participants.
- Avoid fear-based messaging; negative phrases like "it can be too late" were specifically disliked.
- Consider including QR codes on materials to provide easy access to further information.



Community Engagement & Distribution Plan (Hyperlocal in Lupset):

- Developed a hyperlocal on-site action plan based directly on focus group insights about preferred locations and what motivates the community.
- Priority distribution locations for promotional materials include (but are not limited to):
 - Health centres and pharmacies.
 - Shopping areas and supermarkets.
 - Barber shops, hair salons, and beauty parlours.
 - Libraries and bookstores.
 - Bars, pubs, and cafes.
 - Community centres and sports clubs.
- Sharing Learnings:
 - Upon project completion (end of May 2025), a report summary will be distributed to relevant colleagues to share the learning gained from this campaign.

magpie.

