



Maureen Charlton, cancer survivor

# How you can raise awareness of the 'Know 4 sure' campaign in your community

[nhs.uk/know4sure](http://nhs.uk/know4sure)

**The NHS is running a campaign in your area to raise awareness of four key signs of cancer. We need your support to reach local communities.**

## What is Be Clear on Cancer?

Be Clear on Cancer campaigns aim to get more cancers diagnosed at an early stage by raising awareness of key symptoms and encouraging people to discuss them with their doctor earlier. When cancer is picked up early, treatment is more likely to be successful.

Bowel and lung cancer adverts have appeared on national TV and radio. Be Clear on Cancer has also been used in local activities to promote awareness of symptoms for other cancers, including bladder, kidney and breast cancers.

## What is different about this campaign?

There are more than 200 types of cancer, so it isn't possible for the Department of Health to keep running separate campaigns for individual cancers.

But awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer is low and we know that people can put off going to see their doctor for lots of reasons. So, this campaign will highlight four key symptoms of a number of different cancers, including less common ones. Like the other Be Clear on Cancer campaigns it will support, it aims to prompt people to see their doctor if they experience symptoms.

## Who is the campaign aimed at?

Men and women aged 50 and over, because more people in this age group develop cancer. It is also aimed at the friends and family of this group, who can pass on information and encourage loved ones to talk to their doctor if they're worried.

## What is the campaign's key message?

### Know 4 sure

When it comes to cancer, there are 4 key signs to look out for:

1. Unexplained blood that doesn't come from an obvious injury
2. An unexplained lump
3. Unexplained weight loss, which feels significant to you
4. Any type of unexplained pain that doesn't go away

Chances are it's nothing serious, but finding it early makes it more treatable. So if you notice any of these signs, tell your doctor.

## What's happening in your local area?

Local Cancer Networks are working with the Department of Health to plan activities aimed at reaching people in your community. This includes adverts in local newspapers and on the radio, and may include community-based work in some areas as well. They will take place from 14 January to mid-March 2013.

You can help promote the campaign too – order free 'Know 4 sure' posters and leaflets from the Department of Health at [www.orderline.dh.gov.uk](http://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk) or call 0300 123 1002.

## How can you help people in your community?

You have an important role to play. We know that people often listen to advice from friends and family, and people they trust, when deciding if symptoms are serious enough to see their doctor. They might worry about wasting the doctor's time or might be embarrassed.

You know your local community and can help reach those more likely to get cancer. By talking face-to-face, you can help people to understand the main messages and overcome any concerns. Tell them it's important to get symptoms checked out and encourage them to visit their doctor.

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## More about cancer

- **There are more than 200 types of cancer, each with different causes, symptoms and treatment**
- **Almost 9 in 10 cancers in England are diagnosed in people aged 50 and over**
- **More than 1 in 3 people in England will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime**

**‘The ‘Know 4 sure’ campaign gives people a great chance to start conversations about cancer and to help other people realise how much difference it can make if you get any of the key symptoms checked out sooner rather than later. That one-to-one chat might be just what someone needs to persuade them to go to see their doctor.’**

Anna Jozefowicz, Community Health Ambassador, London

### You don't need to give medical advice to help your community

- Avoid asking too many questions about any symptoms someone might tell you about. You don't need to give medical advice – just explain it's best to get them checked out by their doctor. It might not be anything serious, but if it is, finding out sooner can make a real difference.
- Reassure them that the doctor or nurse wants to hear about their concerns. They're not wasting anyone's time and there's no need to feel embarrassed.

**‘I had a lump on the back of my neck the size of a marble and another under my jaw line which was very hard. I had blood tests and a biopsy at the hospital and was diagnosed with lymphoma, a type of cancer. Today I lead an active life and do a lot for charities to raise awareness of cancer.’**

Maureen Charlton, aged 67, cancer survivor and supporter of Cancer Research UK

- Some people might welcome support to make an appointment. If it's appropriate, you could suggest that they take someone with them once it's booked.
- Help people feel more confident about speaking to their doctor; suggest they underline their symptoms on the Be Clear on Cancer leaflet and encourage them to take it with them – it includes some other possible symptoms, as well as the four key ones in the 'Know 4 sure' adverts. They may also find it useful to note whether symptoms are new or unusual, how often they have occurred and how they feel, so they can clearly explain why they are worried.
- If someone has seen their doctor already, but their symptoms haven't gone away, have changed, or got worse, reassure them that their doctor will want to know. Explain that it's important they go back and see their doctor again.
- Ask them to come back and tell you how they got on. This opens the door for you to give them another nudge if they still haven't been to get themselves checked out the next time you see them.

### Talking about cancer can be difficult. Are there any tips?

‘You don't have to have the answers, talking about it is the most important part’, says a Cancer Research UK nurse. ‘Listen and ask questions such as, “What is it that is worrying you?” This allows people to come up with their own answers. Find phrases that you are comfortable with and practise using them. Start by talking about the campaign and asking people if they saw it advertised locally. If they mention a symptom that they're worried about, why not ask them “Do you think it might be a good idea to discuss your symptoms with your doctor?”’

### Three things you can do

- 1 Promote the campaign.** Put up posters in your local area and have leaflets handy to give to people and help you explain the campaign. For support or more information about Be Clear on Cancer activities in your area, contact your local Cancer Network through [www.ncat.nhs.uk](http://www.ncat.nhs.uk).
- 2 Make it part of your day-to-day conversations.** Talking may prompt someone to go and see their doctor. Or they might open up about a symptom they've been hiding or didn't think was serious. We need to encourage people to talk openly about cancer. This campaign gives us all the chance to do that.
- 3 Encourage people to see their doctor.** If people are worried about possible symptoms, we know that they often just need a nudge from family, friends or those around them to persuade them to go to their doctor.

### Find out more about the 'Know 4 sure' campaign

- **From 14 January, direct members of the public to the NHS Choices website:** [www.nhs.uk/know4sure](http://www.nhs.uk/know4sure)
- **If you work for a voluntary sector organisation, for more information and additional materials, visit:** [www.naedi.org/beclearoncancer/know4sure](http://www.naedi.org/beclearoncancer/know4sure)