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Know 4 sure: How practice teams can help with the cancer symptoms campaign

naedi.org/beclearoncancer/know4sure

The NHS is piloting a campaign in your area to raise awareness of four key signs of cancer. We need your support.

What is Be Clear on Cancer?

Be Clear on Cancer aims to improve early diagnosis of cancer by raising awareness of symptoms and encouraging people to see their GP earlier. The Department of Health reviews the latest evidence and engages with experts to develop key messages for the campaigns, testing them locally and regionally, with a view to then rolling them out nationally.

What is different about this campaign?

Following several tumour-specific cancer awareness campaigns, Be Clear on Cancer has become a well-recognised brand. Therefore it is timely to pilot a more general cancer symptoms approach that will work alongside them. 'Know 4 sure' is the headline for this new Be Clear on Cancer campaign – it will be used in all the adverts and materials.

Why run this cancer symptoms campaign?

Awareness of signs and symptoms of cancer is low and we know that people can delay going to see their GP for a number of reasons.

But with more than 200 types of cancer, the Department of Health can't continue to produce individual campaigns. So, this campaign will focus on four key symptoms that are indicators for a number of cancers, including less common ones.

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.

Why focus on these four signs of cancer?

Working with a panel of experts and clinicians, including GPs, the Department of Health selected these symptoms based on clinical predictors of cancer and the findings of research into the most commonly reported symptoms by cancer patients. The campaign message was then tested with a sample of GPs, as well as the target audience. The campaign leaflet also includes other possible cancer symptoms.

Who is the campaign aimed at?

Men and women aged 50 and over, as there is a high incidence of cancer in this age group. It is also aimed at their key influencers, such as friends and family.

What's happening in your local area and when?

Cancer Networks are working with the Department of Health to develop activities aimed at reaching people in your community. Activities will vary across the pilots – all will include advertising, for example in local press, and some may include community-based work, such as local events. These will run from 14 January to mid-March 2013.

Why does this campaign need your support?

It is estimated that up to 10,000 cancer deaths each year could be avoided through earlier diagnosis and access to optimal treatment, if survival rates matched the best in Europe.

That's why we need to encourage people with any of the four key signs to recognise that they should visit their GP without delay. To make this campaign a success, we need you and your colleagues to be aware of it and to talk about it with patients.

Supported by



More about cancer

- **There are more than 200 types of cancer, each with different causes, symptoms and treatments**
- **More than 1 in 3 people in England will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime**
- **More than 236,000 people aged 50 and over are diagnosed with cancer in England each year – that's around 650 people every day**

'Everyone in the practice team has a part to play in helping patients get a cancer diagnosis as early as possible. Practice team meetings are a great way to make sure everyone is briefed on the 'Know 4 sure' campaign and for us to talk about what we need to do to make sure we're ready to support our patients in whatever way we can.'

Kathryn Corner, Practice Manager, Cleveleys

What to expect during the campaign

The Department of Health is initially piloting the campaign on a relatively small scale, so it can assess the impact on primary and secondary care, and test the feasibility of this different approach. We don't know exactly how many people will respond to the campaign and you are likely to see more people coming to your practice with symptoms.

But experience of previous tumour-specific Be Clear on Cancer campaigns suggests that any increase will be manageable. The national bowel cancer campaign that ran from January to March 2012, and included TV advertising, equated to approximately one additional patient with relevant symptoms per practice every two weeks. You may see more patients coming through a few weeks into the campaign.

What impact will the campaign have on your practice?

The [NICE guidelines for suspected cancer](#) recommend that people with relevant symptoms have diagnostic tests and/or be urgently referred if appropriate. Prepare for more assessments and referrals and, as a result, you may have more people ringing up asking for test results.

The campaign may prompt people to discuss symptoms with your practice nurse as part of other appointments or clinics. So, as well as GPs, nurses need to be aware of the key messages.

How can you order campaign materials?

You can order free posters and leaflets from the Department of Health via www.orderline.dh.gov.uk or by ringing 0300 123 1002.

What other support is available for practice teams?

There are lots of resources to support practice teams, including a [Cancer Awareness Toolkit](#) for frontline staff and [General Practice Profiles](#) showing cancer data for your individual practice. Your Cancer Network has a GP lead, who can give you and your GPs further information relating to your local area.

Three things you can do to help

1 Brief colleagues. The whole practice team needs to be aware of this campaign, so they can support it. It's important practice nurses are briefed on the key messages and there's a separate [briefing sheet for GPs](#). It's vital receptionists are prepared for people who have any of the four symptoms wanting appointments. But, they need to be mindful that people may feel that they're wasting the GP's time.

2 Expect and plan for the campaign. Share this briefing sheet, and the one for GPs – make sure your team knows they're available. Encourage everyone to look at the campaign web page and have a look through the campaign leaflet on [NHS Choices](#). Be prepared for an increase in the number of patients sent for diagnostic tests and referred via the urgent two-week wait referral system.

3 Advertise. Display posters and leaflets and encourage colleagues to talk about the campaign. It is often face-to-face discussion that changes behaviour. Talking might prompt someone to make an appointment or open up about their symptoms.

Find out more about the 'Know 4 sure' campaign

- **Information and resources for practice teams are available at:**
www.naedi.org/beclearoncancer/know4sure
- **From 14 January, the public-facing website is**
www.nhs.uk/know4sure