

# HUMBER, COAST AND VALE WINTER 2020/21 CANCER ALLIANCE NEWS



Hayley Williams

## WELCOME WORD FROM HAYLEY WILLIAMS

Over the last few months, we have continued to work with our partners from across the cancer community to maintain services across the Humber, Coast and Vale region, particularly in light of the increasing COVID-19 rates.

As an Alliance, we remain focused on our three priorities set out in plans for recovery: restoring referrals, ensuring sufficient capacity is in place to meet demand and

reducing the number of patients waiting for diagnostics and/or treatment.

We understand that the pandemic has heightened patient anxiety around seeking medical help however, we would like to reassure you that the NHS is still here to help.

If you are experiencing a symptom that may be cancer, it is important to contact your GP without delay and if you have received a hospital appointment, it is important that you attend.

To highlight the safety measures that have been put in place to protect both staff and patients, the Alliance has created a virtual walk through video for each of our Trusts, and I would encourage you to view these by clicking on the links below.

NHS staff are working hard to maintain the highest quality of cancer services across our region and by working as a system, our clinical leaders and stakeholders are supporting the recovery and restoration of cancer services in Humber, Coast and Vale.

In this edition of Cancer Alliance News, we shine a light on the local support groups that have adapted in order to offer vital support for those affected by cancer, we learn about the key role of Rapid Diagnostic Centres, we celebrate achieving a new Cancer Champions milestone, and learn more about a new NHS Cancer Quality of Life survey that asks patients, 'how are you doing?'.

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For more information on accessing NHS services during the pandemic, please visit [hvcanceralliance.org.uk](https://hvcanceralliance.org.uk)



# CANCER CHAMPIONS REACH NEW MILESTONE

THE HUMBER, COAST AND VALE CANCER CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME HAS REACHED A NEW 2020 MILESTONE THANKS TO THE INTRODUCTION OF VIRTUAL TRAINING SESSIONS

By introducing virtual awareness sessions in August 2020, the Humber, Coast and Vale Cancer Champion Programme team have achieved their ambition of having 2,020 Cancer Champions in 2020.

Detecting cancer early can increase chances of survival, which is why the Cancer Champion Programme aims to teach people about the early signs of cancer and equip them with the information needed to engage in potentially life-saving conversations.

There are now more than 2,020 Cancer Champions helping to raise awareness of the symptoms of cancer and encouraging



Zoe Bounds, Emma Lewin and Sarah Patten

order to continue the programme.

“By introducing the virtual sessions, we were pleased to be able to continue increasing the number of people in the HCV area equipped to have those potentially life-saving conversations within their communities.”

If you'd like to take part in a virtual session and become a Cancer Champion, visit [hvcanceralliance.org.uk/cancerchampions/](http://hvcanceralliance.org.uk/cancerchampions/)



early detection across Scarborough, Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire, Vale of York, and North and North East Lincolnshire.

Emma Lewin, Volunteer Co-ordinator for the programme said,

“We started delivering face-to-face awareness sessions in schools,

businesses, and community venues in September 2018, and had set a goal of reaching 2,020 Cancer Champions in 2020.

“However, during the first wave of the pandemic, all sessions were paused until further notice, and we had to adapt in



York Racecourse



Hull Champions



East Riding of Yorkshire Council



North Lincolnshire Council

## FREE CANCER AWARENESS SESSIONS

To sign up for a virtual Cancer Champion training or to organise private training for your business, community organisation or education establishment, please visit [www.hvcanceralliance.org.uk/cancerchampions/](http://www.hvcanceralliance.org.uk/cancerchampions/)

# YEAR OF THE CANCER CHAMPION

LOCAL COMPANY, HOME INSTEAD, ANNOUNCE 2021 AS THE 'YEAR OF THE CANCER CHAMPION'

After staff members from Home Instead attended a Cancer Champion awareness session earlier this year, the organisation felt it was important to ensure all of their staff members were equipped with the knowledge and confidence gained from the course.

For this reason, Home Instead has decided to make 2021 the 'Year of the Cancer Champion' and staff are now given the opportunity to book onto one of the many private awareness sessions taking place throughout the year. Sessions will also be attended by new recruits, as Cancer Champion training is introduced as a mandatory learning module for new team members.

One of the first Home Instead staff members to become a Cancer Champion was Lorna, a Care Manager at Home Instead Senior Care York. After taking part in the training, Lorna said she felt empowered by the Cancer Champion training to have a conversation with her partner and signpost

his friend to supportive information:

“My partner’s friend had spoken to him about his girlfriend, who had some worrying symptoms for which she was having tests. It looked likely that it was cancer. My partner was unsure on what to say in response and I could see he was scared too.

“I talked things through with my partner, giving him tips on how to support his friend and the friend’s girlfriend.

I reached out to his friend and sent some links for useful information, which I know he shared with his partner.

“The fact I had attended the Cancer Champion training session meant I was able to be more supportive to my partner and his friend. I also felt confident enough to signpost them to suitable websites.

“This lady has now started treatment for Leukaemia and I hope

that both her and my partner’s friend know we are there to support them, should they need it.”

The Cancer Alliance offers private Cancer Champion sessions training for educational establishments, workplaces or voluntary groups, and sessions have previously been delivered to the University of Hull, York College, Humberside Fire and Rescue Service, Hull Sikh Community group and others.



**“The fact I had attended the Cancer Champion training session meant I was able to be more supportive to my partner and his friend.”**

If you would like to book a private Cancer Champion awareness session, please visit [hvcanceralliance.org.uk](http://hvcanceralliance.org.uk) or email [eryccg.cancerchampion@nhs.net](mailto:eryccg.cancerchampion@nhs.net)



## RAPID DIAGNOSTIC CENTRES

PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN PLANS FOR RECOVERY AND RESTORATION



As Humber, Coast and Vale Cancer Alliance (HCV CA) continues to mitigate against the impact of COVID-19, Rapid Diagnostic Centres (RDCs) are playing a vital role in helping to increase capacity and achieve early diagnosis for patients with suspected cancer symptoms.

Despite a global pandemic, the Rapid Diagnostic Centre at York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has continued to deliver a personal, accurate and fast diagnostic service to patients with serious non-specific symptoms.

By offering a single point of access to diagnostic pathways, the service delivers a 'one/two-stop' approach and reduces the number of appointments and tests, so patients can receive a rapid diagnosis and be 'ported'

to their appropriate speciality for treatment.

Since its launch at the end of January 2020, the RDC pathway at York has seen over 122 patients and diagnosed 12 cancers along with a plethora of other significant disease. Positive feedback has been received from service users, with one patient saying, "as far as the appointments and waiting, it all worked brilliantly. I wasn't waiting too long." And a patient carer noting, "time wise, it was very good. The speed and reassurance was excellent".

The Alliance is now working with stakeholders to embed RDC principles and pathways across the HCV region and it is anticipated that all patients with serious non-specific symptoms in East Riding of Yorkshire, Scarborough and Ryedale, Vale of York, and Hull will have access to a RDC by summer 2021.

[Click here](#) to find out more about Rapid Diagnostic Centres.

## NEW EASY READ GUIDE

### NHS BOWEL CANCER SCREENING KIT

Bowel cancer is a common type of cancer in both men and women. About 1 in 20 people will get it during their lifetime and screening can help detect bowel cancer at an early stage, when it's easier to treat.

A new easy read booklet and animation has been created to help patients use a NHS bowel cancer screening kits, when requested. The animation is also available with English, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi and Urdu subtitles.

Click on the links to view the [animation](#) and [easy read guide](#).



GatewayC is an online cancer education platform developed by GPs, specialists and people affected by cancer; aiming to assist primary care professionals in detecting cancer at the early stages and improve patient outcomes and experiences.

GatewayC currently offers 16 courses that focus on different tumour sites, which are freely available to all healthcare professionals in England.

To gain free access to our online cancer education courses you can register at: [www.gatewayc.org.uk](http://www.gatewayc.org.uk)



## LUNG CANCER VS COVID-19: KNOW THE SIGNS

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the number of people speaking to their GP about potential symptoms of lung cancer has decreased, which resulted in the number of urgent cancer referrals falling.

Despite seeing a steady rise in referrals, there is still a concern that people with symptoms of lung cancer are not contacting their GP. This may be partly because the symptoms of lung cancer are very similar to the symptoms of coronavirus. Dr Vince Rawcliffe, GP Lead for Cancer at NHS Hull CCG explains,

"Early symptoms of lung cancer and the common symptoms of coronavirus are similar and we understand why people might be hesitant to contact their GP about these symptoms.

"A persistent cough or breathlessness, coughing up blood, unexplained weight loss and tiredness or an ache or pain when breathing or coughing are all early signs of lung cancer. If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, please give your GP a call. The sooner you tell us about these symptoms, the sooner we can help you.

"If you're suffering with a high temperature, a new, continuous cough that feels dry, breathlessness or a change in your sense of smell or taste, it may be

coronavirus. Book a test and self-isolate until you've received your results. If your results are negative and your symptoms persist, book an appointment with your GP."



Persistent breathlessness



A cough for 3+ weeks and/or coughing up blood



Unexplained weight loss

Early diagnosis of cancer can often mean treatment is simpler and more effective. 70% of lung cancer patients will survive for at least a year if diagnosed at the earliest stage. Dr Stuart Baugh, Clinical Director for the Alliance said,

"We want to help anyone experiencing symptoms of lung cancer and it's important we see you early when treatment may be more effective.

"If you are invited to visit the hospital for an x-ray appointment, please attend. There are a range of measures in place to make it safer for both you and staff including PPE and COVID-19 secure areas"

To find out more about the symptoms of lung cancer, please visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

## HELP US HELP YOU: NHS 111 FIRST

NHS England and NHS Improvement have launched the next phase of its 'Help Us, Help You' campaign, which focuses on the NHS 111 Service as a new way to access A&E.

If you have an urgent but not life-threatening medical need, make sure you contact NHS 111 first, rather than going straight to A&E. If you do need urgent care, then NHS 111 can now book you in to be seen quickly and safely in A&E.

This helps keep both you and staff safe by reducing the number of people in A&E departments so social distancing can be maintained and care can be given in the right place.

If you or a loved one have a life-threatening illness or injury, you should always use 999. If you do arrive at A&E without contacting NHS 111, you will still receive medical care, with emergency treatments prioritised.

Just think, 111 first. If you need A&E, contact NHS 111 by phone or online at [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk).



## SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT ON CANCER SUPPORT GROUPS

The Cancer Alliance (CA) are on a mission to raise awareness of the support that is available to those affected by cancer within the Humber, Coast and Vale (HCV) region. Over the last few months, the Alliance has worked hard to grow the number of local groups listed on their online directory and to highlight the support that has been available throughout COVID-19.

By introducing #SupportGroupSaturday to their [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages, HCV CA has linked with local groups to tell the stories of the people attending those groups, and to highlight how the groups have adjusted to be able to continue helping local people affected by cancer.

One of the groups featured as part of the campaign was Breast Friends York, where Barbara, a member, trustee and the group's Secretary, told the story of her cancer diagnosis and how Breast Friends York helped her get through it.

In Barbara's words: "The group, which is open to anyone with a breast cancer diagnosis in York and the surrounding areas, typically meets once a month for a coffee, cake, and a chat. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic, the monthly meet-ups have been moved online and now take place via Zoom.

"Individual members and members of our wonderful Supportive Sewers are continuing to make our heart pillows and drain bags at home to keep the hospitals topped up with supplies.



"To make up for cancelled fundraising events, some of our members have been putting their skills to the test. One of our talented members has been making face masks in return for donations to Breast Friends York (over 150 masks so far!), with another crafting personalised hand sanitiser bottles.

"We continue to keep in touch with and support our members via the Facebook group, as well as answering any queries we receive by email, telephone, or via our website."

Other groups highlighted as part of the campaign, including the Look Good Feel Better group at St Andrews Hospice, Hull and East Riding Breast Friends, and Lindsey Lodge Hospice, have also adapted to continue offering valuable support to local people affected by cancer. its Support Group Directory.

To find support near you, or to register your support group and be included in the directory, head to [www.hcvcanceralliance.org.uk/support-groups](http://www.hcvcanceralliance.org.uk/support-groups).

## SHARE AND LEARN EVENT

The Cancer Alliance recently held its first 'share and learn' virtual event for local support group representatives.

The hour-long event provided an opportunity for participants to network, receive updates from the Alliance, and share best practice or feedback within a supportive environment. The event also included presentations from Macmillan Cancer Support and Cancer Care Map representatives.

The Alliance will host further share and learn events in 2021 and if you would like to be involved, please email [comms.hcvcanceralliance@nhs.net](mailto:comms.hcvcanceralliance@nhs.net)

## QUESTIONS ABOUT CANCER AND COVID-19?

## MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

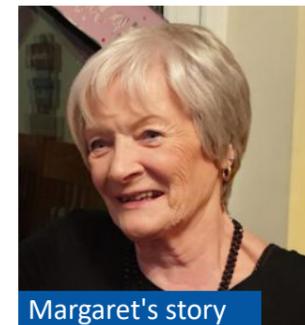
If you have cancer, it's understandable you might be worried about coronavirus.

Macmillan Cancer Support have dedicated a section of their website to provide up-to-date information about COVID-19 and cancer, including answers to the most common questions they've been asked about the coronavirus vaccine.

[Click here to find out more.](#)

## KNOWING WHAT'S NORMAL FOR YOU

MEET THE SISTERS WHO, AFTER RECEIVING TREATMENT FOR CANCER, ARE HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF NOTICING WHAT IS 'NORMAL' FOR YOU



Margaret's story

Margaret didn't experience any pain before her cancer diagnosis but still booked an appointment with her GP.

"My cancer diagnosis came as a shock. I felt well. I didn't have a sore throat or any pain in my mouth, and I wasn't experiencing any problems swallowing.

"The only thing different was that I felt like I had a hair in my mouth and needed to swallow more often.

"The symptom was persistent, so after a couple of months, I used a mirror to look into

my throat, where I saw what looked like a tiny eye or shiny circle, and immediately booked an appointment with my GP."

Within ten days Margaret received a diagnosis of first-grade non-Hodgkin large cell lymphoma.

The cancer had been caught early and a couple of weeks later, Margaret received chemotherapy and then radiotherapy.

Margaret's advice to anyone experiencing unusual symptoms is,

"Always remember to talk to your GP about any problems or symptoms concerning you and get help when you need it!"

To read Margaret's story in full, please visit [hcvcanceralliance.org.uk](http://hcvcanceralliance.org.uk)



Christine's story

Towards the end of January 2019, Christine noticed that her entire body began to feel itchy.

Christine said, "I tried everything to stop it, from soothing sprays to creams and antihistamine tablets, but nothing worked. I wasn't in any pain anywhere, but I felt maybe a little more tired.

"On 1st February at around 3 am, I couldn't stand the itching anymore, and asked my husband to take me to A&E, where I'd hoped they'd give me a strong antihistamine injection or some tablets to help.

"However, the young doctor who saw me insisted on doing a blood test, which I think saved my life."

After several tests, Christine was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Now, 20 months on from major surgery Christine is in remission, and her advice to anyone experiencing unusual symptoms is,

"If anyone has anything 'different' happening to them...seek professional advice. Although it pays to talk things over with family and friends and look online, you can't believe everything you're told or see on the internet. Speak to your GP as they have the experience and knowledge to help you best."

To read Christine's story in full, please visit [hcvcanceralliance.org.uk](http://hcvcanceralliance.org.uk)

## A WARM WELCOME TO HEATHER MCNAIR



Humber, Coast and Vale Cancer Alliance would like to introduce Heather McNair, Chief Nurse at York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust as the new Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Living With and Beyond Cancer Programme (LWBC).

Heather will be supporting the delivery of the LWBC programme objectives for 2020-21, which aim to ensure those living with and beyond cancer across our region are able to live well because of the provision of great health and wellbeing services and personalised care interventions.

On what supporting people living with and beyond cancer in the HCV region means to her, Heather said, “As more people survive cancer, it is important that patients continue to receive the highest level of care, and to do this we need to ensure patients are supported to be more in control and better able to cope with their treatment and recovery.”

“I am extremely proud to be a nurse and midwife and am privileged to have been given the opportunity to lead this fantastic profession, particularly through what has been a quite extraordinary year. My ambition is to build on the foundations we have laid in the last 15 months and continue to grow and thrive on our improvement journey.”

Heather is taking over from Jacqueline Myers, and the Alliance would like to thank Jacqueline for her valuable contributions over the last three years and wish her all the best for the future.

[Click here](#) to find out more about the LWBC programme.

## NHS CANCER QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY

NEW QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY DELIVERED TO MORE PEOPLE LIVING WITH AND BEYOND CANCER

Quality of life means different things to different people, but it matters to everyone. More people are surviving cancer than ever before - but living with cancer, and the effects of its treatment, can have a negative impact on people’s physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

Public Health England, NHS England and NHS Improvement understand that quality of life (QoL) outcomes are important to patients. That’s why they launched a nationwide Cancer QoL Survey to help understand what matters to patients.

From December, all patients diagnosed with breast, prostate or colorectal cancer in England will be invited to complete the survey 18-months after their

diagnosis. People with other cancer types will be included from July 2021 onwards.

The information collected from the survey will help to work out how best to support people living with and beyond cancer. This is an ambitious programme with a scale and depth that isn’t being matched anywhere else in the world.



[Click here](#) to find out more about the Quality of Life survey.

### COULD YOU BE A LOCAL QUALITY OF LIFE CHAMPION?

Humber, Coast and Vale Cancer Alliance want to encourage as many people as possible to complete the new NHS Cancer Quality of Life survey, so the information collected fully represents our cancer population.

In order to do that, the Alliance is looking for people to act as ‘local champions’ and help to promote the survey locally.

If you would like to get involved [click here](#) to find out more or email [Erin.Barton@nhs.net](mailto:Erin.Barton@nhs.net)