

# Lung cancer earlier diagnosis campaign in Wales

May 2025



Gyda chefnogaeth/Supported by



Together we are beating cancer  
Gyda'n gilydd rydym yn curo cancer

## About the campaign

In May 2025, Cancer Research UK will run a multi-channel advertising campaign for six weeks across Wales. Created in partnership with NHS Wales and with the support of the Welsh Government, the campaign aims to drive earlier presentation of patients with potential lung cancer symptoms.

This campaign follows the positive results of an early diagnosis campaign that Cancer Research UK ran in partnership with NHS Wales in 2024, which encouraged the public to contact a GP if they noticed any unusual changes that could be signs of cancer.

## Why is earlier diagnosis so important?

In Wales, around 1,800 people die from lung cancer every year [1]. One of the reasons outcomes are poor for lung cancer is that a significant proportion of cases are diagnosed at a later stage [2]. Earlier diagnosis of lung cancer can lead to more effective treatment options and better outcomes for patients. In Wales, 55% of people will survive their disease for five years or more when diagnosed at the earliest stage. This falls to 3% when diagnosed at stage 4 [3].

**Peswch parhaus? Diffyg anadl?  
Ydy o'n ganser yr ysgyfaint?**

Siaradwch â'ch meddyg teulu,  
nid chi'ch hun.



**Ongoing cough? Breathlessness?  
It could be a sign of lung cancer.**

Talk to your GP, not yourself.

[cruk.org/arwyddioncancer](https://cruk.org/arwyddioncancer)  
[cruk.org/spotlungcancer](https://cruk.org/spotlungcancer)

Infonau eiddoedd gofrestrwyd / Reg charity numbers: 1089464, SC048066, 103 & 247



## Proportion of people surviving lung cancer for 5 years or more

Survival at stage 1: 55%



Survival at stage 4: 3%



Our hope is that by highlighting the key signs and symptoms of an ongoing cough, unexpected weight loss and breathlessness, this campaign will help to support timelier presentation and an earlier diagnosis of lung cancer. A shift from a diagnosis at stage 4 to stage 3 can increase the chances of people surviving their lung cancer for five years or more [4].

## Why are we focusing on lung cancer symptoms in Wales?

Timely diagnosis of people with potential cancer symptoms is key to improving survival. We hope to see lung cancer screening implemented across Wales soon. But even when it's fully implemented, lung screening won't be able to diagnose every case of lung cancer. So early presentation of symptoms will remain essential.



A 2024 Cancer Research UK survey also highlighted the need for a lung symptom awareness campaign [5]. The results showed that:

- people in Wales were significantly less likely to contact their GP surgery within six months of experiencing at least one lung-specific cancer symptom compared to people in Scotland, Northern Ireland and England
- people in Wales were significantly less likely to have contacted their GP surgery within six months of experiencing breathlessness than people in Scotland

Communications, such as awareness marketing campaigns, are essential to improving appropriate and timely presentation of cancer in primary care and engagement with subsequent tests and referral pathways. Previous Cancer Research UK early-diagnosis awareness campaigns in Wales have shown positive results of self-reported help-seeking actions [6].

## What are we doing and when?



**When:**  
1 May–8 June  
2025



**Where:**  
Wales

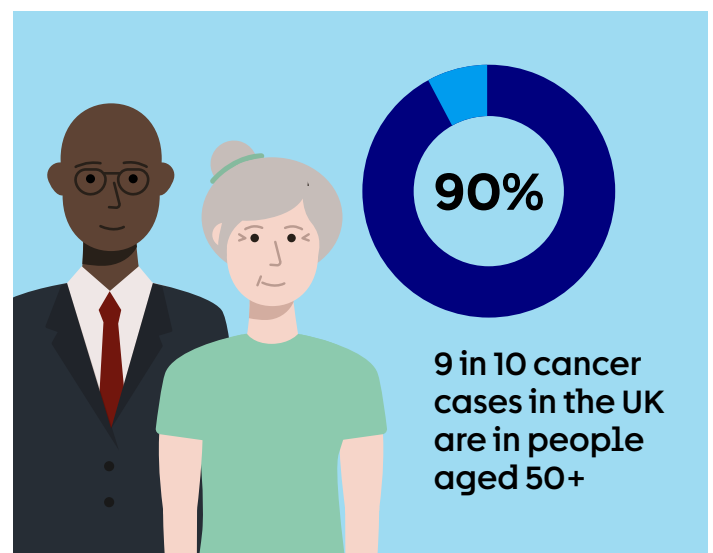
We'll advertise across TV, radio, paid-for social media, newspapers, outdoor posters and Cancer Research UK social channels. Our nurses will visit various workplace and public-facing settings across Wales via our Cancer Awareness in the Workplace and Cancer Awareness Roadshow programmes. They'll speak with employees and promote the importance of earlier diagnosis.



## Who is the campaign aimed at?

Our campaign is aimed at people aged 50 and over in Wales, particularly those from more deprived backgrounds. While cancer can develop at any age, it's much more common as we get older: 9 in 10 cancer cases in the UK are in people aged 50 or over [7].

Similarly, populations with higher deprivation have higher prevalence of some cancer risk factors and have lower awareness of cancer symptoms. They also report more barriers to seeking help. [8].



## What are the key messages?

- ✓ If you notice a change that's unusual for you, contact your GP.
- ✓ An ongoing cough, breathlessness or unexplained weight loss could be signs of lung cancer.
- ✓ It's probably nothing serious, but if it is cancer, spotting it early can save lives.

## How will we evaluate the campaign?

We'll use mixed methods to evaluate the campaign. This will include a survey and interviews with members of the public to explore symptom experience, their awareness of lung cancer symptoms and the actual and hypothetical barriers and enablers they face when contacting a doctor.

Participants will also be asked about what actions they took in response to the campaign. We hope to see people taking, or intending to take, positive actions, such as:

- speaking to a doctor about a change in their health
- speaking to friends and family about the advert
- encouraging someone they know who has potential lung cancer symptoms to go to their doctor
- remembering this campaign should they ever notice changes in their health

## What are we doing to support health professionals?

We're telling health professionals about the campaign before it launches through tailored briefings to primary care clinicians in Wales, including GPs, community pharmacists and practice managers. The briefings will contain support and guidance around cancer recognition and referral. We're also signposting our resources for primary care via social media channels and paid-for third-party bulletins.

For more information, please contact: [Natasha.Lofters@cancer.org.uk](mailto:Natasha.Lofters@cancer.org.uk) for our health professional campaign overview.

## Where are we directing people?

We'll encourage people with relevant signs and symptoms to contact their GP practice.

We'll also signpost our public-facing **campaign webpage** developed for people in Wales with information about early diagnosis of lung cancer.

- [cruk.org/spotlungcancer](https://cruk.org/spotlungcancer) (English)
- [cruk.org/arwyddioncanser](https://cruk.org/arwyddioncanser) (Welsh)

## Other resources

We also have an early diagnosis leaflet that can be downloaded or ordered from our website: [publications.cancerresearchuk.org/collections/early-diagnosis](https://publications.cancerresearchuk.org/collections/early-diagnosis)

- Welsh leaflet
- English leaflet

## Contact

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## References

- [1] Based on the average annual number of deaths from lung cancer (ICD10 C33-C34) in Wales in the years 2019, 2021 and 2022.
- [2] Cancer incidence in Wales. Public Health Wales, Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit. Accessed March 2025.
- [3] Cancer survival in Wales. Public Health Wales, Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit. Accessed March 2025.
- [4] Calculated by the Cancer Intelligence team at Cancer Research UK. Based on incidence by stage data for 2017–2019 and survival by stage at diagnosis for 2016–2020, followed up to 2023.
- [5] Whitelock, V., (2024) Cancer Research UK's 2024 Cancer Awareness Measure 'Plus' (CAM+)
- [6] Data from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1,267 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken 28 May–13 June 2024. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of adults in Wales (aged 18+).
- [7] Data are for 2017–19 and were provided on request by: the National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service (England); ISD Scotland (Scotland); Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit (Wales); and Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (Northern Ireland).
- [8] Cancer Research UK. Cancer in the UK 2025: Socioeconomic deprivation. Published February 2025.