

Cancer in Scotland

Background

The Scottish Government wishes to increase understanding of data from organisations we fund to identify existing and emerging issues relating to cancer in Scotland. Cancer is a major cause of death and ill health of Scottish citizens and places many demands on the National Health Service. In 2021 National Records of Scotland found that in Scotland the rate of [avoidable mortality](#) of preventable cancer deaths was more than twice that of treatable cancer deaths. Early detection and intervention is key to saving lives.

Some [health screening](#) and [vaccination](#) programmes have been introduced to either prevent or catch disease at earlier stages. We'd like to identify how well the public is engaging with health improvement schemes.

Programme	Cancer Type	Target Audience
Screening	Bowel cancer	screening for men and women aged 50 to 74
Screening	Breast cancer	screening for women aged 50 to 70
Screening	Cervical cancer	screening for women aged 25 for 64
Vaccination	Cancers caused by Human papillomavirus (HPV)	vaccine offered to every first year secondary school pupil in Scotland

[Public Health Scotland](#) (PHS) was established in 2020 with the aim of increasing healthy life expectancy and reducing premature mortality. [NHS Inform](#) provides information and advice directly to the general public.

Age is a risk factor for adult cancer. With an ageing Scottish population, to assist government planning and resourcing for the future we would like to know more related to following topics:

- **Death** (Long-term effectiveness of public health prevention campaigns and medical treatments)
- **Cases** (New incidences. Tracking existing and emerging issues)
- **Screening programmes** (Early detection, take-up by citizens)
- **Waiting times for treatment** (Better outcomes, shorter = better)

[Scottish Cancer Registry](#) contains a great deal of detail regarding cases but due to the sensitivity of the information access is restricted to NHS only. Aggregated information from the registry is made available via PHS. Another general aim as part of awareness raising

and transparency is to improve communication with the general public and collate relevant cancer information in easy to access and understand ways such as dashboard.

The Data

Death data for all causes is provided by the National Records of Scotland (NRS)

- All ages age-standardised death rates for all causes and certain selected causes, Scotland, 1994 to 2022

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/age-standardised-death-rates-calculated-using-the-esp>

Cancer health data is provided by Public Health Scotland: Public Health Scotland Open Data

- [Themes: Health and care, Cancer](#)

Includes: Cancer Waiting Times, Annual Cancer Incidence, Cancer Mortality

https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/organization/781cf24c-beba-43c7-bb2b-d2f9f4556581?_groups_limit=0&groups=cancer

Screening

- Bowel screening

Scottish bowel screening programme statistics For the period of invitations from May 2020 to April 2022

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/17689/2023-02-21-bowel-screening-kpi-report.xlsx>

Waiting Times

- Cancer Waiting Times: 31 Day Standard and 62 Day Standard

<https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/dataset/cancer-waiting-times>

General reference tables

- Explanations of codes used

https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/organization/781cf24c-beba-43c7-bb2b-d2f9f4556581?groups=reference-files&_groups_limit=0&tags_limit=0

General Questions

Death

- How do deaths from Cancer compare to other leading causes of death in Scotland?
- Has COVID-19 affected deaths from Cancer?

Cases

- How have cases varied over time.
- Are there any patterns emerging between different cancer types? Any specific cancer types rising/falling more than others?

- Do cancer types vary between different age groups?

Screening

- What has uptake by the general public been like for bowel screening to date?

Waiting times

- Are we meeting our targets for treatment e.g. 31 days/62 days?