



## Be Clear on Cancer: Fourth national blood in pee awareness campaign, 2018

**Caveats:** This summary presents the results of the metric on urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer. This is one of a series of summaries that will be produced for this campaign, each focusing on a different metric. A comprehensive interpretation of the campaign incorporating a full evaluation of all the metrics is published separately. These metrics should not be considered in isolation.

### Urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer

#### The campaign

The fourth national blood in pee awareness campaign ran from 19 July 2018 to 16 September 2018 in England.

The core campaign message was:

- 'If you notice blood in your pee, even it's just the once, tell your doctor.'

#### Key message

The fourth national blood in pee awareness campaign may have had some impact on the number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer.

#### Metric: Urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer

This metric considers whether the fourth national blood in pee awareness campaign had an impact on the number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer, often referred to as two-week wait (TWW) referrals. It uses data from the National Cancer Waiting Times Monitoring Dataset, provided by NHS England, presented by month first seen. The analysis period was July to October 2018 and was compared to the same four months in 2017<sup>1</sup>.

#### Results

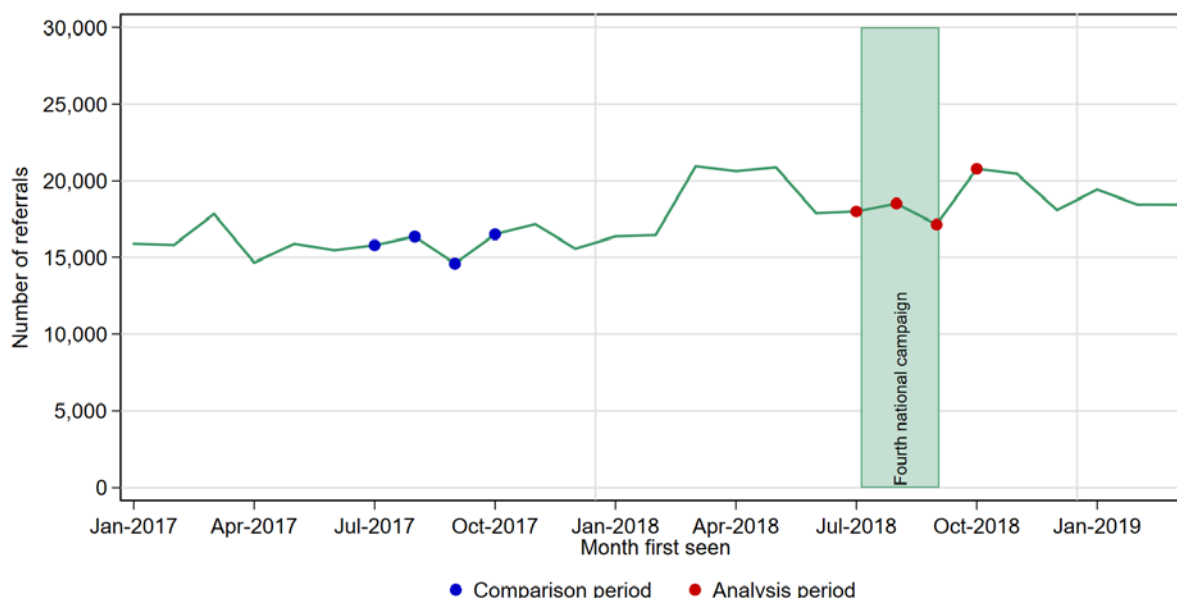
There was a relatively stable number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer from January 2017 to February 2018, with an apparent increasing step-change from March 2018 onwards, including particular peaks for March to May 2018 and October to November 2018 (Figure 1). Between July to October 2017 and July to October 2018, the number of urgent referrals for suspected urological cancer statistically significantly increased by 17.7% ( $p < 0.001$ ), compared with a statistically significant 14.3% ( $p < 0.001$ ) increase in the number of urgent GP referrals for other suspected cancers (comparison group)<sup>2</sup>. Similar results were found for those aged 50 and over; there were statistically significant increases in the

<sup>1</sup> Further details on methodology used for Be Clear on Cancer campaign analysis can be found [here](#)

<sup>2</sup> Urgent GP referrals for other suspected cancers, excluding breast, urological, and lung cancers

numbers of urgent referrals for both suspected urological cancer (18.4%,  $p < 0.001$ ) and other suspected cancers (15.3%,  $p < 0.001$ ).

**Figure 1: Monthly number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer from January 2017 to March 2019, England**



Comparing July to October 2018 with the same months in the previous year, there were statistically significant increases in the number of urgent referrals for suspected urological cancer among all age groups, sexes, and deprivation quintiles.

- By age, increases ranged from 10.5% ( $p < 0.001$ ) among those aged under 50 to 20.1% ( $p < 0.001$ ) among those aged 70 to 79.
- By sex, there was a larger increase for men (21.1%,  $p < 0.001$ ) than for women (6.7%,  $p < 0.001$ ).
- By deprivation quintile, increases ranged from 15.8% ( $p < 0.001$ ) in the second most deprived quintile to 19.8% ( $p < 0.001$ ) in the second least deprived quintile.

## Conclusion

There was a statistically significant increase in the number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer, although the large increase in referrals appears to start many months before the campaign started.

It is worth noting that in the same year that the campaign was run, two high-profile public figures announced their prostate cancer diagnoses. The increase in urgent GP referrals

from March 2018 onwards may be related to the media coverage of the prostate cancer diagnoses for these two public figures.

The fourth national blood in pee awareness campaign may have had some impact on the number of urgent GP referrals for suspected urological cancer.

Other metrics being evaluated include cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected cancer, cancer diagnoses recorded in the Cancer Waiting Times database, numbers of cancers diagnosed, and stage at diagnosis

## Considerations

In general, cancer incidence is increasing which may have an impact on trends over time for this and other metrics, and so the results must be considered with these underlying trends in mind.

Where the results are statistically significant there is some evidence for an impact of the campaign, although underlying trends and other external factors (for example other awareness activities, changing referral guidance) may also affect the results.

Campaigns are more likely to have a greater impact on metrics relating to patient behaviour (for example symptom awareness and GP attendance with relevant symptoms) and use of the healthcare system (for example urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer), compared to disease metrics (for example incidence and stage at diagnosis).

Find out more about Be Clear on Cancer at:

[www.ncin.org.uk/be\\_clear\\_on\\_cancer](http://www.ncin.org.uk/be_clear_on_cancer)

[www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer/](http://www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer/)