NHS
Wessex
Cancer Alliance

Communities Against Cancer

Cancer prevention and early diagnosis in the NHS Long Term Plan

Cancer survival is the highest it's ever been and thousands more people now survive cancer every year. For patients diagnosed in 2015, one year survival was 72% over 11 percentage points higher than in 2000. Despite this progress, one of the biggest actions the NHS can take to improve cancer survival is to diagnose cancer earlier. The NHS Long Term Plan sets a new ambition that, by 2028, the proportion of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 will rise from around half now to three-quarters of cancer patients.

Using existing, trusted relationships to reach less engaged communities

Wessex Cancer Alliance's Communities Against Cancer initiative will help build on work to raise greater awareness of symptoms of cancer and maximise the number of cancers that we identify through screening – and, importantly, help to reduce health inequalities.

Communities Against Cancer offers grants to community organisations to help educate and raise awareness of cancer and screening programmes among communities that are traditionally less-engaged with healthcare services.

The initiative will provide training to leaders who are trusted figures within their communities, so they can have conversations on the signs and symptoms of cancer and signpost people to services. It is anticipated that by using these existing relationships to deliver key health messages, more people within those communities will take action to lead healthier lifestyles and act on their screening invitations.

First grants awarded

Wessex Cancer Alliance has commissioned Action Hampshire to run the initiative. In April 2019 Action Hampshire invited community organisations to apply for small grants up to £1,000 or large grants up to £15,000. A panel of representatives from Action Hampshire, Wessex Cancer Alliance, Wessex Voices and the Citizen's Advice Bureau reviewed the applications. In June 2019 12 large grants and four small grants were awarded to a variety of community groups, including black and minority ethnic people, learning disability and vulnerable young people groups, across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and Dorset.

The larger grants have been awarded to:

- Awaaz FM
- Dorset Race Equality Council
- Dorset Advocacy
- Headway Portsmouth and SE Hants
- Mustard Seed Ministries
- No Limits
- One community
- PALS Society
- People First Dorset
- PramaLife
- Southampton Mencap
- Wessex Cancer Trust

Smaller grants have been awarded to Isle of Wight Carers, Dorset Polish Centre, Priory Road and TwoHarbours Healthcare.

Next steps

Most of the community groups will start their projects in July 2019, with the remaining projects due to begin in September 2019. Wessex Cancer Alliance will monitor progress through quarterly reviews with Action Hampshire to evaluate the success of this initiative.