



Transforming cancer care together

## Media Release

31 January 2020

### **Spotlight on world-class Leeds services on World Cancer Day - 4 February**

Cancer services in Leeds are rapidly developing to help the city reach its ambition for being the best city in the UK for Health and Wellbeing. Since 2016, external funding through the Leeds Cancer Programme has brought **£6.5m of extra funding** to the city, alongside the breadth of services already provided by the NHS in Leeds at the world-class Leeds Cancer Centre at St James' University Hospital.

In Leeds there are approximately 25,000 people living with and beyond cancer and around 4,000 new diagnoses every year. To address this challenging climate, the Leeds Cancer Programme brings together Macmillan Cancer Support, the NHS in Leeds and Leeds City Council to work in partnership with other charities and the third sector to transform cancer services across the city. Through its dynamic and ambitious strategy, it is committed to delivering the best outcomes for all in Leeds through cancer services shaped by patients, carers and the wider public.

The programme is working to address some of the lifestyle factors that can play a contributory role to people developing cancer, as 4 out of 10 of cancer cases are thought to be preventable. This includes reducing smoking rates, tackling obesity and other lifestyle factors which are responsible for 42% of cancer cases in the city. Improvements in cancer care and treatments mean that more people are living longer with cancer and need ongoing support, which can put additional pressures on the health and care system in Leeds.

## **Leeds Cancer Programme Director, Professor Sean Duffy:**

“The Leeds Cancer Programme has contributed so much to the prevention, diagnosis and care of cancer in Leeds through working with partners across the city. By working together to help improve cancer outcomes for the people of Leeds, we have been able to achieve lasting transformation in technology, diagnostics and support, as well as addressing health inequalities apparent in our communities by ensuring we improve the health of our poorer neighbourhoods.”

Some of the initiatives brought to Leeds by the Leeds Cancer Programme include:

- Funding from **Yorkshire Cancer Research** is enabling a city-wide infrastructure to be put in place to ensure that people who do not take up their cancer screening invitation for breast, bowel and cervical cancers are identified and followed-up to support and encourage attendance. The programme will also ensure people are aware of the signs and symptoms of cancer and the lifestyle factors that can increase the risk of cancer.
- The implementation of '**Teledermatology**' technology which allows patients to be seen within their GP practice in suspected skin cancer cases. Images taken by a dermatoscope are digitally transferred from GP surgeries to the hospital where they are triaged within 48 hours by a consultant dermatologist. From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019, 12,294 patients were referred in Leeds for suspected skin cancer and 8,261 patients were triaged this way. This saved 2,108 patients avoiding travel to an unnecessary hospital-based appointment.
- The development of **ACE**, (Accelerate, Coordinate and Evaluate), a pathway for people with non-specific but concerning symptoms of cancer. The pathway aims to enable patients to be diagnosed quicker, avoid multiple tests and avoid unnecessary admissions. So far, the service has received over 2,106 referrals, (Jan 2017 – Jan 2020). Of these, 132 cancers have been diagnosed and 577 other serious conditions diagnosed.
- The implementation of **Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)** in GP practices is a test is for patients with concerning symptoms who are classed as “low risk, but not no risk” of having colorectal cancer. The test was introduced to all Leeds GPs

in April 2019 with the aim of detecting cancer at an earlier stage, therefore increasing the chance of successful treatment.

- The '**Community Cancer Support Service**', initiated by Leeds Cancer Programme, is a new service in Leeds that will be based in local areas, but also work across GP practices, hospitals and the voluntary sector. The service will provide personalised support to cancer patients in their local area throughout and beyond their cancer treatment, ensuring access to the right care, in the right place and at the right time.

**World Cancer Day** is an annual event held on the 4th February. Its aim is to empower all across the world to raise a collective voice about cancer, and to focus on cancer in a positive and inspiring way.

**ENDS**

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