



## Leeds Cancer Programme



Transforming  
cancer care  
together

After a delay due to the pandemic, we are pleased to bring you our fifth 'Stakeholder Newsletter'. In this issue we will update you on the developments within the Leeds Cancer Programme, its current achievements, reflections on cancer services during Covid-19, and our new focus for the future.

### Sustainability and refocus of Leeds Cancer Programme

**Joanna Bayton-Smith**  
Macmillan Programme Manager  
Leeds Cancer Programme

Prior to the pandemic affecting the delivery of cancer services and the implementation of new initiatives, I was already aware that the focus and priorities of the cancer programme needed to change. This was due to several factors; the end of 3 years of significant funding from **Macmillan Cancer Support** which had enabled us to build a robust programme infrastructure, the end of contracts and secondments of key team members, and the need to reflect national priorities within the **NHS's Long Term Plan**. This included a focus on increasing uptake of breast, bowel and cervical screening as part of the national screening programmes, implementation of rapid diagnostics to improve patient experience and a move towards more personalised cancer care. As well, we now need to ensure we continue to manage the impact of Covid-19 on delayed diagnoses and treatments of cancer within our population.

During the last few months we have seen an inevitable reduction in urgent 2 week wait cancer referrals due to what we fear has been the public reluctance to contact primary care, even with worrying signs and symptoms of



cancer. Working with partners across the city we have maintained a series of communications to the public emphasising the need to contact their GP with specific signs and symptoms. We will be using data available to us to ensure we focus our attention to the most urgent cancer pathways.

We will address significant health inequalities across communities of Leeds, where cancer outcomes are sadly less fortunate. Essentially, we will be focusing our work to the people and communities who need us most.

Also in this edition we showcase the work of **Cancer Wise Leeds** and **Leeds Cancer Awareness** to show how Covid-19 has encouraged them to work differently to deliver their objectives.

*"During the COVID pandemic cancer services have responded by maintaining treatments as much as possible, however challenges remain especially in terms of diagnostic tests. Overcoming these challenges and maintaining the positive changes that the COVID crisis brought are the focus of the cancer teams in the coming months."* **Professor Sean Duffy, Strategic Clinical Lead, Leeds Cancer Programme**

## Cancer Wise Leeds - The impact of Covid-19 on cancer screening services



**Ingrid Burns**  
**Cancer Wise Leeds**

Cancer Wise Leeds is funded by **Yorkshire Cancer Research** and delivered in partnership with **Leeds Cancer Programme** within its Prevention work stream. Our ambition is to enable

GP practices to improve bowel, breast and cervical screening uptake across the city and increase awareness of the signs, symptoms and risk factors of cancer amongst the public. We will focus on communities with low screening uptake and high deprivation. This is being achieved through the establishment of a Leeds network of **Cancer Screening and Awareness Coordinators** working within Primary Care Networks.



The Covid-19 pandemic has placed services delivering cancer care in a challenged environment and our Cancer Wise Leeds team is working hard to support local NHS services. Screening services have been interrupted in England with routine invitations postponed for 12 weeks.

Our delivery team has responded swiftly to the news that the restoration of cervical screening in Primary Care is underway. The programme focus has now shifted to supporting cancer screening and we are working collaboratively with **Primary Care Networks** to help identify and mitigate the challenges of encouraging cervical screening and to share solutions to get services back on track, without overloading the health and care system.

## Leeds Cancer Awareness – Delivering our vision through Covid-19



**Megan Arundel, Leeds Cancer Awareness**

Throughout the Covid-19 outbreak the Leeds Cancer Awareness Programme (LCA) have been working to voice our key cancer messages. The team have promoted the online

volunteer from home opportunity, '**Digital Health Ambassadors**', to increase the number of volunteers helping the team to share key cancer messages. Due to current restrictions we have transferred much of our work onto social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram. We post three key cancer messages a week and focus on encouraging the public to speak to their GP if they notice any changes and experience potential cancer symptoms. We have also been promoting other services across the city including the Covid-19 hotline and mental health services.

One particularly positive social media activity targeted '**Leeds Dads**'. We liaised with the group's organiser and this led to the LCA Programme providing some topics for discussion during the live feed. We also invited questions during the Leeds Dad's Facebook live session. These questions launched a discussion into cancer symptoms as well as encouraging men to self-check their testes.

These are unprecedented times and we are learning how to overcome obstacles every day. A huge positive that is emerging from this situation is that we are all becoming more aware of the opportunities that exist to enhance the ways in which we ensure that the residents of Leeds understand that, when it comes to Cancer, "**Early Detection Saves Lives**".

## Developing and adapting - The introduction of transperineal biopsy under local anaesthetic at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust



**Olly Hulson, Consultant Radiologist, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust**

Prostate cancer is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer in England. Prostate cancer diagnostics have seen radical changes over recent

years, most notably with the introduction of **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)** performed prior to considering a prostate biopsy. Leeds Teaching Hospitals was an early adopter of this approach, and it aims to do so again with the introduction of a new technique to biopsy the prostate gland.

Previously, the vast majority of biopsies were performed via the transrectal route. Although this was adequate for most patients, the risk of infection using this technique was not insignificant, and it could also make targeting certain areas of the gland difficult. **Transperineal (TP) biopsy** allows samples to be taken through the skin overlying the prostate, allowing the operator to access to all parts of the gland, and also significantly reduces the risk of infection.

This new technique will allow us to ensure that from July 2020, our patients get the best possible



biopsy at the earliest opportunity, streamlining patient care and ensuring we have a greater depth of understanding of an individual's disease. In the future this may have a bearing on what treatments can be offered to these patients, with the aim of providing treatment with curative intent with the fewest possible side effects.

## Introducing Peter Lodge



Peter Lodge, MD FRCS, is the newly appointed **Associate Clinical Director of Cancer** for Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

Professor Peter Lodge trained in surgery in Leeds and Yorkshire, and then at Harvard

Medical School, returning to Leeds as Consultant Surgeon in 1992. He was awarded a Chair in Surgery in 2004. Peter has created a major hepatobiliary unit for Leeds, providing a service for difficult liver tumours, developing innovative surgical strategies for patients with complex problems, and also multi-organ transplantation. He has been active in research, attracting significant grant income and venture capital funding, supporting many young surgeons for higher degrees. He has achieved more than 250 publications and 30 book chapters, including "Liver" in Gray's Anatomy.

Peter has previously contributed as Clinical Director for Surgery 2002-2009. He has been an advisor for the Health Care Commission and the Care Quality Commission and for NICE. He helps the Royal College of Surgeons of England as a reviewer for major surgical units and surgeons in need of help. He has a reputation as a key opinion leader in liver surgery and he contributes to many international debates, runs workshops and also offers advice to colleagues around the world for difficult cases on a regular basis. Peter has also trained many surgeons in successful liver surgery and transplant jobs in the UK and abroad. He has been committee chair and council member for the major international liver surgery societies, IHPBA and E-AHPBA, and also the prestigious European Surgical Association (ESA). He is also an associate editor for two major surgery journals. As a result of Peter's work, Leeds will host the **ESA Congress** in May 2024, a major opportunity to showcase the achievements of the Leeds Cancer Centre.

As an employee of the National Health Service, Peter has promoted the NHS internationally as a brand for research, innovation and quality in patient care. In his new role Peter will; develop and ambitious **5 year cancer strategy**; drive the

Optimal Pathways work to make diagnosis and treatment more efficient; improve access to rapid diagnostics and treatment for all cancers; enable patient-led personalisation of cancer care; and improve the visibility of Leeds Cancer Centre at national and international level.

## Launch of the Community Cancer Support Service – personalising care

**Heather Oxley, Macmillan Project Manager**



*Gemma Brooksbank, Clinical Team Manager and Alison Allen, Senior Nurse*

The vision of the Community Cancer Support Service is to work with Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in Leeds to improve the quality of life for patients and carers living with and beyond a cancer diagnosis. We will also aim to improve the access to local support services in order for them to lead as full and active life as possible, and have care personalised to their needs. In preparation for the launch, we are developing systems to support **personalised care and holistic needs assessments**, with "What matters to me" at the centre of this, ensuring what we develop is integrated and supports the patient journey through the health and care system.

The launch of the service in Leeds, in partnership with **Macmillan Cancer Support**, has been delayed due to the effects of the pandemic with clinical members of the team being redeployed in response to Covid-19. Phase one of the will launch with the Otley, Yeadon and Harehills/Richmond Hill/ Burmantofts Primary Care Networks in September 2020.. This pause has meant we've had to reconsider how the service should launch, exploring options around our virtual offer whilst also being conscious that the service needs to be inclusive of all people. One of our early challenges will be engaging our "seldom heard" communities across our geographical patch.

As we plan to extend the service across more PCNs in Leeds, recruitment continues but we're delighted to have welcomed several new starters over summer. For more information please contact [heather.oxley1@nhs.net](mailto:heather.oxley1@nhs.net)