

Community Health ‘Wise Up To Cancer’ Pilot

About Wise Up To Cancer (WUTC)

Yorkshire has the third worst cancer incidence rates in England and Yorkshire Cancer Research's strategy aims to reduce the region's number of cancer-related deaths. WUTC focuses on prevention and early diagnosis and involves the delivery of an intervention which aims to:

- Lower cancer risk by promoting healthy lifestyles
- Spot cancer early by encouraging people to:
 - speak to their GP if they have any cancer signs and symptoms
 - take part in their cancer screening

WUTC is being piloted with 2,000 people in West Leeds communities (delivered by Community Health Educators via Barca Leeds) and Wakefield district pharmacies (delivered by pharmacy champions supported by Community Pharmacy West Yorkshire).

The pilot was evaluated over the initial nine months by Leeds Beckett University to identify how helpful it had been and how it could be improved in the future.



What does it involve?

WUTC Intervention

An informal ‘conversation around cancer’ is delivered through the use of a questionnaire which looks at lifestyle risk factors for cancer, awareness and experience of cancer signs and symptoms and attendance at cancer screening programmes. People are given advice, encouraged to set personal goals and are signposted to relevant support services.

Follow-up assessment

As part of the evaluation, a follow-up questionnaire was sent 6 to 8 weeks later. This looked at whether the person had made any changes around the goals they set, the impact of these changes and captured programme feedback.



What has been found so far?

1,347 people (34% male and 66% female) completed WUTC within the evaluation period and 168 people took part in the follow-up.

WUTC has been successful in targeting people who need to make lifestyle changes. For example, over half of the people who took part reported as overweight and a quarter reported as smokers. 70% of all participants were eligible for screening. However, only 19% of these were screening non-attenders.

Awareness of signs and symptoms was lowest among men, however, 80% of people agreed they had learnt something new through WUTC.

1,695 health-related goals were set which included:

- 948 people (70%) setting at least one lifestyle-related goal. 50% of these were signposted to a support service.
- 106 people (62%) with potential signs or symptoms planning to consult their GP.
- 179 people (65%) who are non-attenders of national screening programmes, planning to engage in screening

Of those people followed up, many reported making positive changes against their goals. These included:

- 9 in 10 people who had set a goal on weight and diet had taken action
- 7 in 10 people who had set a goal on smoking had taken action
- 3 in 10 people who had set a goal to consult a GP about a sign/symptom have since done so
- 9 of the 26 screening goals we could follow-up had been completed

This short intervention was sufficient to provide a positive impact on changes which will increase the prevention and early diagnosis of cancer. However, more work is needed to identify and deliver interventions to screening non-attenders.

What happens next?

The evaluation will inform plans to continue funding WUTC and roll out to other areas in Yorkshire. Yorkshire Cancer Research are also currently launching two WUTC pilots in the following areas:

- Bradford - this pilot will include cancer champions delivering WUTC checks in community and pharmacy settings and the delivery of interventions in GP settings to increase prevention and early diagnosis of cancer in Asian women.
- Wakefield - this pilot will include cancer champions delivering interventions in GP practice settings to increase screening uptake.

“I feel more confident to check things out”

Wise Up To Cancer was a “Wake Up Call”

“More energetic and less tired. Feel more positive”

“Can breathe a lot better now I’ve stopped smoking and started exercising”

For more information visit www.ycr.org.uk/wiseuptocancer