

## Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance pleased to announce publication of 2023/24 annual report

Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance is pleased to announce the publication of its **2023/24 annual report**.

The 2023/24 edition is the Cancer Alliance's biggest annual report to date – a reflection of the plethora of work which has been carried out during the past 12 months in order to transform the diagnosis, treatment and care for cancer patients living in Humber and North Yorkshire.

There have been plenty of positives to draw inspiration from in 2023/24 as the various work programmes have taken great strides over the past 12 months to improve outcomes for the people and communities that the Cancer Alliance serves.

Below are just some of the many achievements of the work carried out with partners between April 2023 to March 2024. By working collaboratively with partners, the Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance has:

- Significantly reduced the number of patients waiting more than 62 days to start treatment following referral. As of the week ending 31st March 2024, the over 62-day backlog figure was 421 patients, down from a peak of 829 in October 2023.
- Successfully met the faster diagnosis standard rate requirement of 75% of patients finding out whether they have the disease within 28 days of referral by the end of March 2024.

- Surpassed 5,000 people trained as **Cancer Champions**. The programme widened its reach to deliver cancer awareness training to refugee groups, Muslim faith groups, and learning disability groups. During the year, the programme also launched its train-the-trainer programme, which aims to deliver cancer awareness training deeper into the community through trusted and peer voices.
- Extended the **NHS Targeted Lung Health Check service** into East Riding of Yorkshire, meaning the service is now available in Hull, North East Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire. In 23/24, 11,404 people had an initial Lung Health Check assessment (from 27,853 invited), with 4,449 people referred for a follow-up scan which led to 84 cancers detected (75% at an early stage).
- Taken part in NHS England's 23/24 **Cancer Experience of Care Improvement Collaborative**, specifically launching an initial project exploring how to improve psychosocial support for people with a cancer diagnosis who also have a pre-existing mental health condition. This project has featured extensive co-production with experts by lived experience.
- Hosted an annual conference at Hull's MKM Stadium in September 2023. Despite it falling on a day of industrial action, more than 130 colleagues attended to learn about the work of the Cancer Alliance.

- Created the Cancer Alliance's first ever **strategy to address the issue of health inequalities** in cancer treatment and care among the most deprived communities in Humber and North Yorkshire.
- Developed its new **Working with People and Communities: Patient and Public Engagement Strategy**. The strategy outlines how the Cancer Alliance will establish a robust approach to involve cancer patients in its work.
- Created the **Cancer Alliance's Cancer Diagnostics and Innovation Programme** which takes a collaborative, multi-partner approach to explore the opportunities to adopt innovative technology to harness cutting-edge approaches to cancer diagnostics.
- Recruited six new **clinical delivery group** (CDG) leads, and established three new CDGs – breast cancer, skin cancer and non-surgical oncology – increasing the number of CDGs to nine.



**Lucy Turner**  
Managing Director  
Humber and North Yorkshire  
Cancer Alliance

## One Big Thank You for our Zoe Bounds on the BBC's One Show



A member of Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance's core programme team recently featured on BBC One's magazine and chat show, *The One Show*.

Project Delivery Manager Zoe Bounds, of the Treatment, Pathways and Personalised Care programme, received *The One Show's* One Big Thank You for her contribution to community support group **Breast Friends York**.

Zoe, who has been diagnosed with cancer twice, co-founded Breast Friends York in April 2014 with Rachel Bruce, to offer non-medical-based support for patients with a breast cancer diagnosis in the York area.

Zoe joined the Cancer Alliance as a patient representative in 2017 and became an employee in 2019. She was not aware of her TV nomination, having been nominated in secret by Lucy Hart, the treasurer and trustee of Breast Friends York.

Zoe was persuaded by colleagues to travel to Oxford on 30 April to be interviewed for a new TV show about running. Zoe thought she was going to be interviewed to promote the benefits of physical activity after receiving a cancer diagnosis.

Despite wanting to avoid the spotlight, she was persuaded to take a train to Oxford with colleague Karen Lindley. Following an incident in which Karen and Zoe were confused with a 'Karen and Lindsay' and nearly taken elsewhere by taxi, they arrived at the park where presenter Julia Bradbury was waiting.

As Zoe and Julia jogged around the park for an interview, friends and members of Breast Friends York began to appear from behind bushes. Despite the surprise of her friends greeting her, Zoe appeared cool, calm and collected.

Zoe was overwhelmed when the truth was revealed, and a video of "thank you" messages, including from her Cancer Alliance colleagues, was shown. Even actor Ben Hardy (*Bohemian Rhapsody*) surprised Zoe by paying tribute to her.

Zoe said of her experience on *The One Show*, which was transmitted 16 May on BBC One: "When Julia revealed the real reason for all the fuss I was really honoured.

"Breast Friends York is my therapy. Alongside all the other cancer-related work I do, it helps me make sense of why I've survived cancer twice. That I can help support others brings me immense joy and makes my experiences worthwhile."

Lucy Turner, Managing Director of Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance, said: "Everyone who works with Zoe is so proud of the hard work and commitment to helping cancer patients in our region. She thoroughly deserves this recognition".

### Cancer Alliance commended for performance in 2023/24

Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance was among the cancer alliances recently commended by Dame Cally Palmer, National Cancer Director for NHS England, and Professor Peter Johnson, National Clinical Cancer Director. The directors praised the cancer alliances for their patient backlog reduction performance during 2023/24.

In March 2024, the cancer alliances met their 2023/24 target to reduce the cancer 62-day backlog (14,916 vs the target of 18,755). The cancer alliances also reached 78.1% Faster Diagnosis Standard (FDS) in February 2024. The results mean the cancer alliances achieved both national cancer performance ambitions set last year.

Every cancer alliance met its 'Fair Shares' backlog target – a testament to the huge effort of work by each team. The success puts cancer alliances on a strong footing during an election year and the next Spending Review.

Humber and North Yorkshire ICB, of which the Cancer Alliance is a directorate member, met its 'fair shares' backlog reduction target. This includes data from the Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust.

Dame Cally Palmer and Professor Peter Johnson said to the cancer alliances: "Throughout the year you have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving services."

York Hospital received a visit from Dame Cally Palmer in June, where she was able to meet the team and see improvements funded by the Cancer Alliance.

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## Cancer Alliance staff spotlight



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**In this edition, we shine the staff spotlight on Mr Auos Al-Dujaily, who is Gynaecology Clinical Delivery Group (CDG) Lead for Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance.**

Auos began his career in the UK in 2007. The majority of his medical training took place in the Humber and North Yorkshire region, where he completed his obstetrician and gynaecology (O&G) training, with a special interest in gynaecology.

Having spent his first five years as a consultant in South Yorkshire, where he was an oncology unit lead, Auos returned to Hull in 2022, where he lives with his wife and two daughters.

### What is your Cancer Alliance role and what does it entail?

I am the lead for the gynaecology CDG, where I work in collaboration with cancer units across the Cancer Alliance to improve the care delivered for patients diagnosed with gynaecological cancer.

We work with stakeholders to provide standardised, up-to-date pathways and referral criteria, and we aim to diagnose cancers quicker and at earlier stages. In addition to improving cervical cancer screening uptake for the prevention and detection of cervical cancer, we also provide genetic testing for patients at risk of endometrial and ovarian cancers.

### What attracted you to the role?

I am passionate about improving women's health, and the introduction of faster diagnostic standards gives me an excellent opportunity to put my experience as unit lead – and my knowledge in managing pathways – to great use.

We're overhauling our approach to cancer diagnostics in gynaecology with the aim of improving capacity and pathway management to support our patients – from referral to diagnosis, and beyond.

### What do you see as the main challenges in your role?

With increasing pressure on all services, capacity is the main challenge. It not only delays diagnosis and treatment in secondary care, but also limits access in overstretched primary care.

Working in harmony across all sectors, while educating our patients, is the best way for us to improve cancer outcomes.

### What are you looking forward to most in the near future?

What I'm most looking forward to is the upcoming innovation in the diagnosis and treatment of gynaecological cancer. There are many exciting opportunities to improve diagnosis of ovarian cancer, treatment of endometrial cancer and the elimination of cervical cancer.

The CDG and I are looking forward to the introduction of the new standardised referral form. This will improve both access to secondary care and empower GPs across the region in both referral and in reassuring patients who do not need to be referred.

## Patient representative Allyson shows heart and sole on cancer charity challenge



Awareness and Early Diagnosis

Cancer Alliance patient representative Allyson Kent walked more than the equivalent distance of a marathon each week in May to help raise funds for cancer research.

Allyson took part in Yorkshire Cancer Research's "We Walk for Yorkshire" walking challenge.

We Walk for Yorkshire is a walking challenge for anyone who wants to keep active and save lives in Yorkshire.

Allyson contributed towards a collective total of 31,000 miles throughout the month. Yorkshire Cancer Research's total represents the number of people who were diagnosed with cancer in Yorkshire each year.

The campaign has helped raise awareness of the important role exercise plays in cancer prevention and treatment. Allyson, a former NHS worker, lives in the East Riding of Yorkshire. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2019 and ovarian cancer in 2020.

As a patient representative for the Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance, Allyson shares her experience of the disease to help improve cancer services across Humber and North Yorkshire.

Allyson's aim was to walk 108 miles during May, but she achieved an incredible 120 miles in total. She is a firm believer in the positive power of exercise, and finds it as important for her mental wellbeing as her physical health.

She said: "Since my diagnosis, I've become hooked on walking – whatever Mother Nature has in store for me! So "We Walk for Yorkshire" seemed like the perfect chance to help raise money and awareness for cancer research."



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## Cancer Alliance annual conference: save the date!

The 2024 Cancer Alliance annual conference will take place on Thursday, 19 September at the Lakeside Conference Centre at York Biocamp Campus.

The annual conference celebrates the work taking place across the Humber and North Yorkshire area to improve the diagnosis, treatment, and care for cancer patients.

Don't miss out – you should have received an email, where you'll find a link to register your interest.

## Bowel Cancer Awareness Month campaign breaks Cancer Alliance records



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Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance's campaigning for **Bowel Cancer Awareness Month** saw the team and its partners shining a light on ways to #flushawaybowelcancer.

The Cancer Alliance's most successful awareness campaign yet featured a month of activities to raise awareness of the symptoms of bowel cancer, and to encourage people aged between 56 and 74 to complete a Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) when they receive one in the post.

This multi-pronged approach ranged from the cheeky to the serious – the former certainly highlighted by members of the Cancer Alliance wearing fake bums and bowel aprons at parkruns across the region.

Volunteers teamed up with organisations for awareness activity sessions throughout April, including helping Bowel Cancer UK with their Bowel Cancer Awareness Roadshow in Hull. Passers-by even got the chance to wander through the charity's giant inflatable bowel, which provided a quirky way to discover symptoms and ask questions. The Cancer Champions team also carried out bitesize bowel cancer awareness sessions throughout April.

Among the packaged video and photo content were interviews with Dr Dan Cottingham and former patients and advocates for the FIT kit from across the region. Earned media coverage included campaign features from ITV Calendar and BBC Radio Humberside.

The Cancer Alliance also issued a targeted digital advertising campaign, focusing on postcode areas in the region where screening take-up is lowest.

## Cancer Alliance recruits new Patient and Public Representative Group members

Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance is actively recruiting people with lived experience of cancer to join its expanding Patient and Public Representative Group.

Lived experience can mean a representative either is or has been a patient or the carer of someone with a cancer diagnosis.

Patient or Public Representatives of the Cancer Alliance share experiences of cancer to help improve cancer services across Humber and North Yorkshire. Their main role is to use their unique individual knowledge and experience to give feedback on and advise about the impact on patients of work developed and undertaken by the Cancer Alliance.

Patient and Public Representatives can use their voices to challenge the approach and thinking of those making decisions, while remaining respectful and open to a wide range of opinions and thought processes.

Some of the many ways that representatives can be involved include sitting on Cancer Alliance programme boards, steering committees and working groups, and representing the Cancer Alliance at community engagement events.

Simon Maddocks, a current Patient Representative, said: "The Cancer Alliance wants to work with us to get it right for people with a diagnosis in our area. We can and do make a difference, and our opinions matter."



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To become a Patient or Public Representative for the Cancer Alliance, potential candidates must complete an **expression of interest form**, sharing their experience of cancer and why they want to become involved.

For more information, take a look at **[the recruitment pack](#)**.

