



## NHS Plans To Diagnose Cancer Within 28 Days

A funding boost to support faster diagnosis of the disease could save 30,000 lives a year by 2020, it is claimed.

**NHS England has announced plans to improve cancer care and give patients a definitive diagnosis within four weeks.**

It is hoped a £15m investment boost will allow doctors to diagnose people suspected of having cancer within 28 days of them being referred by their GP.

**The target was first proposed by Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt in October** and an NHS report suggests the move could save 30,000 lives a year by 2020.

Improvement plans include using health experts to analyse data for cancer survival rates, early diagnosis rates, treatment outcomes, patient experience and quality of life, and use it to target areas for improvement.

The plan to improve the service follows a **Sky News investigation in February** which revealed cancer patients are being treated on radiotherapy machines past their sell-by date.

The Royal College of Radiologists said Sky News' findings were "scandalous" and a senior cancer specialist blamed the financial crisis in the NHS.

The action plan also follows the NHS' Independent Cancer Taskforce report published last year, which identified how the NHS can achieve a world-class cancer outcomes.

Cally Palmer, national cancer director for NHS England, said: "One in two people will be diagnosed with cancer and too many people are being diagnosed when their cancer is

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advanced. We need to change this.

"Through this cancer strategy we will drive a transformation in cancer care that will touch every corner of the country and improve services for thousands of people."

Dr Fran Woodard, executive director of policy and impact at Macmillan Cancer Support, said:

"We are also pleased to see commitments in the plan to ensure more people benefit from personalised care after treatment.

"But it is not clear how these parts of the strategy will be funded over the next five years.

"NHS England and the Government must set out how they propose to fund this essential part of the cancer strategy if the improvements described in the plan are to be delivered."

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