



## Be Clear on Cancer: Second national lung cancer awareness campaign, 2013

**Caveats:** This summary presents the results of the metrics on cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected cancer and conversion rates. This is one of a series of summaries that will be produced for this campaign, each focusing on a different metric. A comprehensive interpretation about the campaign is not included here as this requires a full evaluation of all the metrics. The full evaluation will be part of the final campaign report which will be published in due course. These metrics should not be considered in isolation.

# Cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected cancer and conversion rates

### Key message

The second national lung cancer awareness campaign does not appear to have had an impact on the number of lung cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected lung cancer or the conversion rate in the period July to September 2013.

### **The campaign**

The second national lung cancer awareness campaign ran from 2 July 2013 to 11 August 2013 in England.

The campaign's key message was:

- 'Been coughing for three weeks? Tell your doctor.'

### **Metric: Cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected cancer**

This metric considers whether the campaign had an impact on the number of new lung cancer cases that resulted from an urgent GP referral for suspected lung cancer, often referred to as two week wait (TWW) referrals.

### **Metric: Conversion rates**

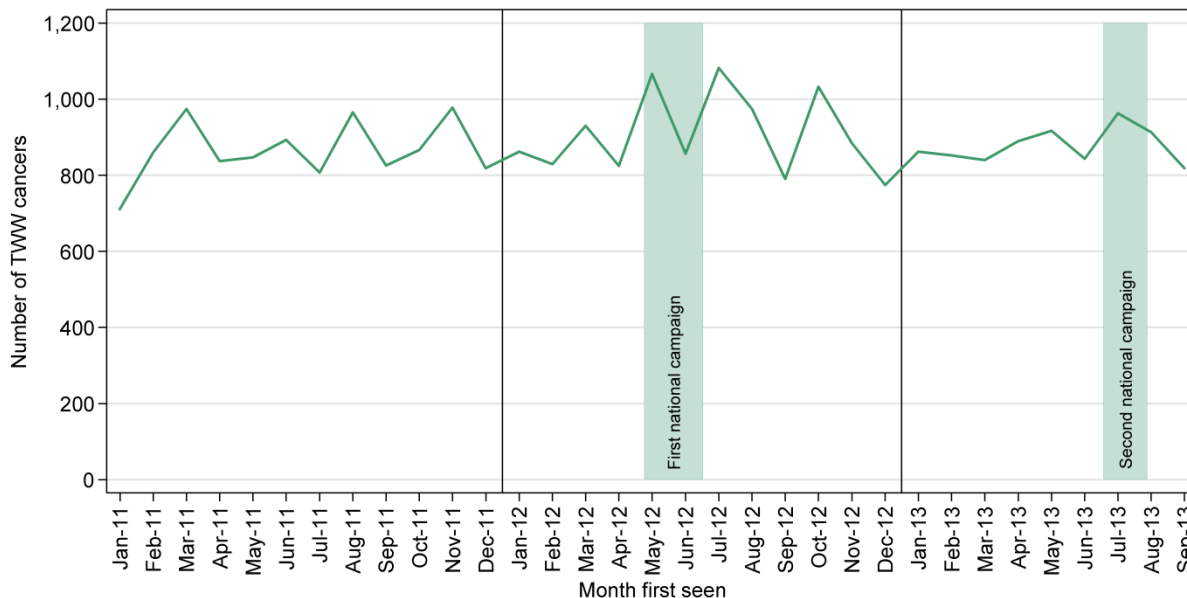
This metric considers whether the campaign had an impact on the percentage of urgent GP referrals for suspected lung cancer resulting in a diagnosis of lung cancer (conversion rate).

Data are taken from the National Cancer Waiting Times Monitoring Data Set, provided by NHS England. Results are presented by month first seen. For both metrics, the analysis compared the campaign period July to September 2013 with July to September 2011. Lung cancer cases were defined as those with an ICD-10 diagnosis code of C33-C34, C37-C39 or C45.

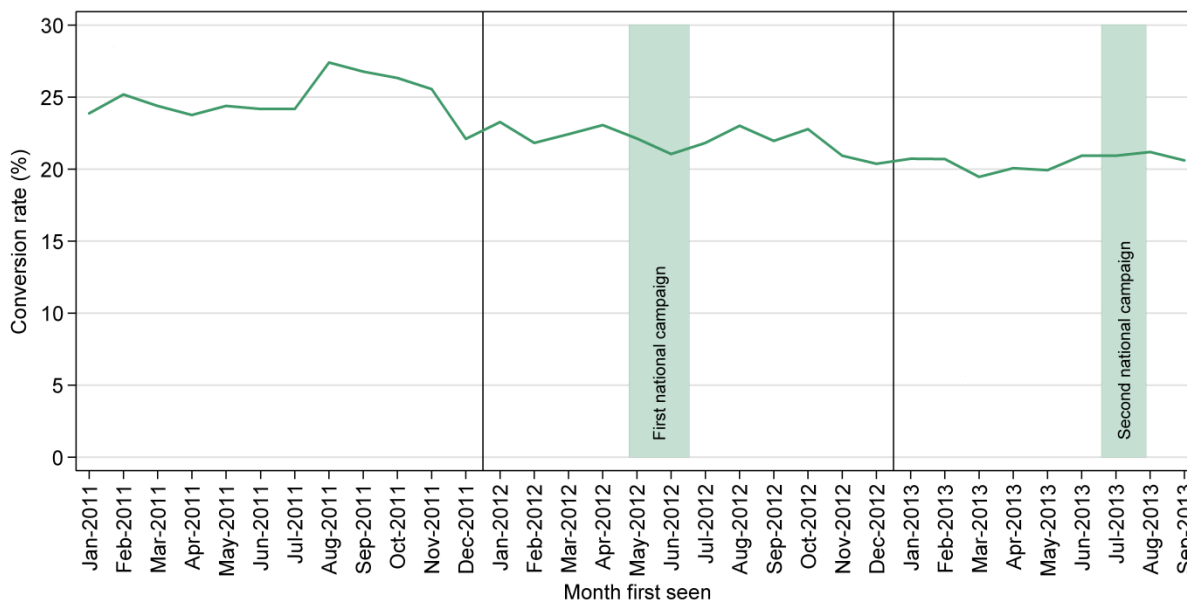
## Results

The number of lung cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected lung cancer in July to September 2013 was 2,695, compared to 2,598 in the same period in 2011 (Figure 1). This change was not statistically significant.

**Figure 1: Monthly number of lung cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected lung cancer from January 2011 to September 2013, England**



**Figure 2: Monthly conversion rate for urgent GP referrals for suspected lung cancer, January 2011 to September 2013, England**



The conversion rate for urgent GP referrals for suspected lung cancer fell significantly in England over the period, decreasing from 26% in July to September 2011 to 20% in July to September 2013 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This decrease appeared to reflect a more general decreasing trend, rather than an association with the second national campaign (Figure 2). Results were similar when broken down by sex or by age group.

## Conclusions

The second national campaign does not appear to have had an impact on either the number of lung cancer diagnoses resulting from an urgent GP referral for suspected lung cancer or the conversion rate.

Other metrics being evaluated include emergency presentations, urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer, detection rates, numbers of cancers diagnosed, stage at diagnosis and one-year survival. A full evaluation report will be published on the campaign metrics when all of the results are available.

## Considerations

In general, cancer incidence is increasing which may have an impact on trends over time for this and other metrics; the results must be considered with these underlying trends in mind.

Where the results are statistically significant there is some evidence for an impact of the campaign, although underlying trends and other external factors (eg other awareness activities, changing referral guidance) may also affect the results.

Campaigns are more likely to have a greater impact on metrics relating to patient behaviour (eg symptom awareness and GP attendance with relevant symptoms) and use of the healthcare system (eg urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer), compared to disease metrics (eg incidence, stage at diagnosis, and survival).

Find out more about Be Clear on Cancer at:

[www.ncin.org.uk/be\\_clear\\_on\\_cancer](http://www.ncin.org.uk/be_clear_on_cancer)

[www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer](http://www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer)