



Cancer patients who present as an emergency in England, by CCG

Main findings

The latest quarterly emergency presentations of cancer figures, at national and CCG level, show that:

- between October and December 2016, of 66,379 cancer patients first presenting at hospital in England, 12,678 (19.1%) presented as an emergency; this represents a fall from the previous quarter (July to September 2016) when the proportion was 20.2%
- in England, the annual average proportion of cancer patients who first presented as an emergency has gradually fallen over the last three years reported, from 20.4% in January to December 2013 to 19.8% in January to December 2016
- at Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) level, there was a threefold variation in the proportion of cancer patients who first presented as an emergency in the most recent quarter (October to December 2016); across the 209 CCGs the proportion varied from 11.6% to 31.9%, with an interquartile range* of 17.4% to 21.6%
- over the last three years reported (between January to December 2013 and January to December 2016), the proportion of cancer patients presenting as an emergency has fallen for 123 CCGs, and either risen or remained unchanged for 86 CCGs

*The interquartile range describes the distribution of values from the 25% to 75% percentile, and therefore covers half of the range in values around the median (average).

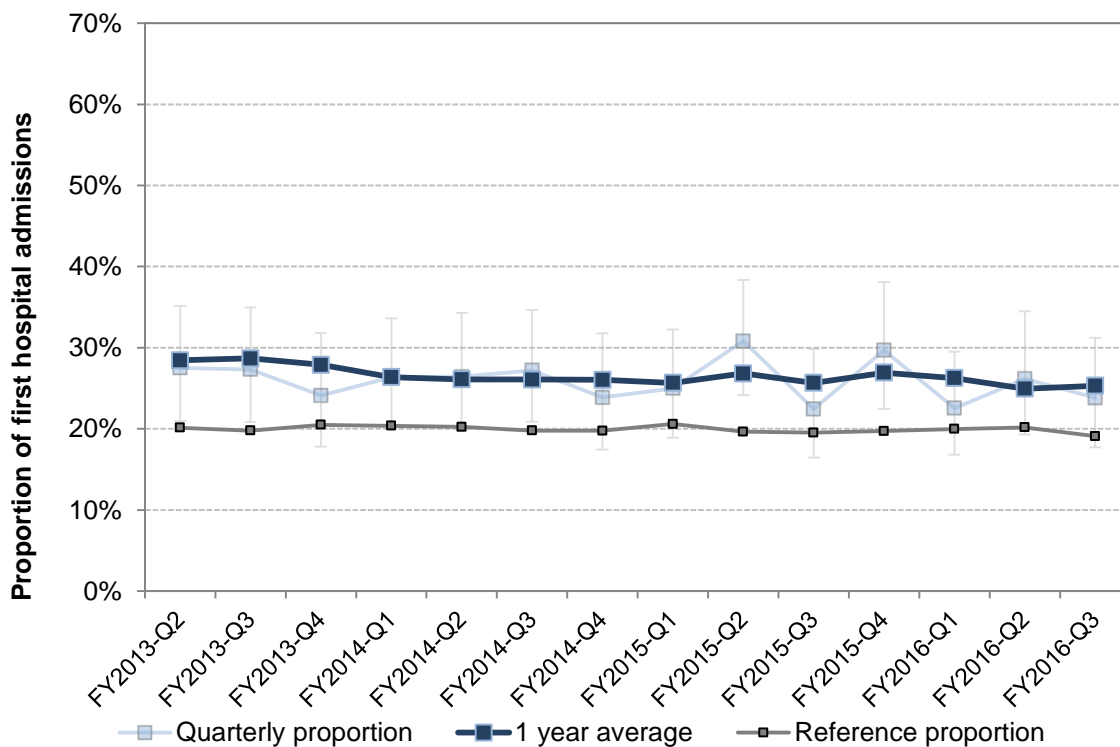
Summary

The accompanying spreadsheet presents the proportion of all patients with malignant cancer (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) who present as an emergency at CCG level and

nationally, both quarterly and with a 1-year rolling average (which combines the result for the latest quarter with those from the previous three quarters). The most recently available results are for October to December 2016 (financial year quarter 3, Q3), with trends available from July to September 2013 (Q2).

http://www.ncin.org.uk/cancer_type_and_topic_specific_work/topic_specific_work/cancer_outcome_metrics

Figure 1. Trend in the proportion of first hospital admissions that are emergencies in England (reference) and for an example CCG



Background

Emergency presentation is an important predictor of cancer outcomes: patients with cancers that present as an emergency suffer significantly worse outcomes. The [recent cancer strategy for England](#) recommended that the proportion of emergency presentations should be regularly reported and reviewed. The metric estimates the proportion of emergency presentations using first admissions to hospital as a proxy for emergency diagnosis. This allows more rapid reporting.

Notes on interpretation

There are some cancers, e.g. brain or children's cancers, where emergency presentation is likely to be the most appropriate route to diagnosis.

While a fall in emergency presentations may correlate with improved survival, this is not necessarily a direct cause and many other factors will be involved.

The denominator is all tumours identified from Admitted Patient Care Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) and therefore does not include all diagnosed tumours registered by the National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service (NCRAS). Consequently, the results presented here may differ from publicly available results such as [Routes to Diagnosis](#).

The indicator is not adjusted for case-mix. In particular CCGs with an older population can expect to see a larger number of emergency presentations. CCGs with a larger number of lung cancers (due to smoking prevalence) or smaller number of breast cancers (due to broader socio-economic factors) can also expect to see a larger proportion of emergency presentations.

Smaller numbers at CCG level will result in large variability in emergency presentations, and larger confidence intervals.

Further Information

A document, further detailing the data sources and methodology used to create the emergency presentations indicator, is available to download here:

<http://www.ncin.org.uk/view?rid=3058>

Other background information is also available:

- Cancer Outcome Metrics:
http://www.ncin.org.uk/cancer_type_and_topic_specific_work/topic_specific_work/cancer_outcome_metrics
- Routes to Diagnosis: http://www.ncin.org.uk/publications/routes_to_diagnosis
- Independent Cancer Taskforce Strategy:
http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/sites/default/files/achieving_world-class_cancer_outcomes_-_a_strategy_for_england_2015-2020.pdf

For queries relating to this document, please contact: sam.johnson@phe.gov.uk

First published: July 2017

© Crown copyright 2017

Re-use of Crown copyright material (excluding logos) is allowed under the terms of the Open Government Licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/ for terms and conditions.