



## Be Clear on Cancer: Second national breast cancer in women over 70 campaign, 2015

**Caveats:** This summary presents the results of the metric on early stage at diagnosis. This is one of a series of summaries that will be produced for this campaign, each focusing on a different metric. A comprehensive interpretation of the campaign incorporating a full evaluation of all the metrics is published separately. These metrics should not be considered in isolation.

### Early stage at diagnosis

#### The campaign

The second national breast cancer in women over 70 campaign ran from 13 July 2015 to 6 September 2015 in England.

Core campaign messages were:

- 'One in three women who get breast cancer are over 70, so don't assume you're past it.'
- 'A lump isn't the only sign of breast cancer. If you're worried about any changes to your breasts, tell your doctor straight away.'

#### Metric: early stage at diagnosis

This metric considers whether the second national breast campaign had an impact on the proportion of breast cancers (ICD-10 C50) diagnosed at an early stage of 1 or 2 in women aged 70 and over.

Data was extracted from the national cancer analysis system for the diagnosis period March 2014 to February 2016. The analysis period was defined as two weeks after the start of the campaign (week 31 of 2015) to two months after the end of the campaign (week 46 of 2015). The proportion of early staged cases per week during the analysis period was compared with the overall median for March 2015 to February 2016. The campaign was considered to have a possible impact if a) the proportion per week was the same or higher than the median for five or more consecutive weeks and b) this sustained period started during the analysis period.

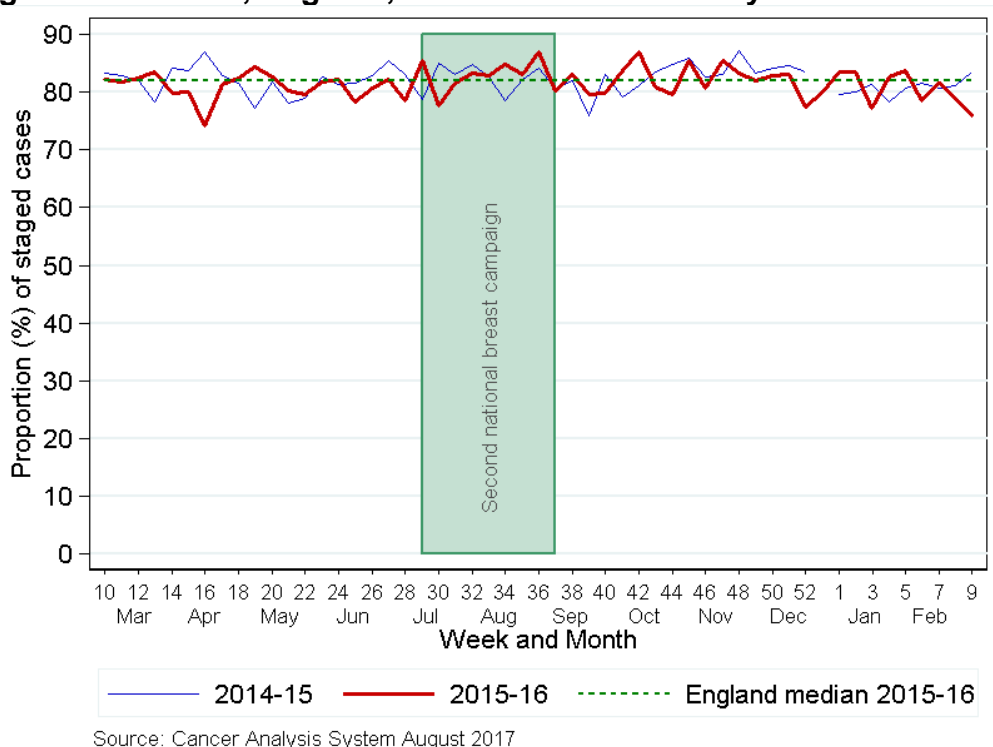
#### Results

The proportion of early staged breast cancers was the same as or higher than the 2015 to 2016 median from week 32 to 36 in 2015 (Figure 1) for persons aged 70 and over. During this period, an additional 35 cases were diagnosed at an early stage compared to the expected number based on the median (1,235 cases) (Figure 1).

#### Key message

The second national breast campaign may have had an impact on the proportion of breast cancers diagnosed at an early stage in women aged 70 and over.

**Figure 1: Proportion of breast cancers diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 by week, women aged 70 and over, England, March 2014 to February 2016.**



## Conclusions

The second national breast campaign may have had an impact on the proportion of breast cancers diagnosed at an early stage in women aged 70 and over.

Other metrics being evaluated include GP attendance, urgent GP referrals, conversion and detection rate, emergency presentations and one-year survival.

## Considerations

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

The proportion of staged cases for the Be Clear on Cancer (BCoC) metric summaries was calculated using denominators which excluded cases with unknown stage. Other National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service (NCRAS) outputs on proportion of staged cases include cases with unknown stage in the denominator. Therefore the proportions of staged cases reported in the BCoC metrics are different to other NCRAS publications. Excluding cases with unknown stage ensures greater comparability across years for the BCoC metrics, as the proportion of cases with a completed stage has rapidly increased since 2014.

Where the results are statistically significant there is some evidence for an impact of the campaign, although underlying trends and other external factors (for example 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 (for example symptom awareness and GP attendance with relevant symptoms) and use of the healthcare system (for example urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer), compared to disease metrics (for example 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)