



27 July 2020

## Wessex Cancer Alliance Update Bulletin 17.

Please find below, details of the most recent communications and guidance issued for Cancer. Please share this with colleagues and other teams who may find these updates useful.

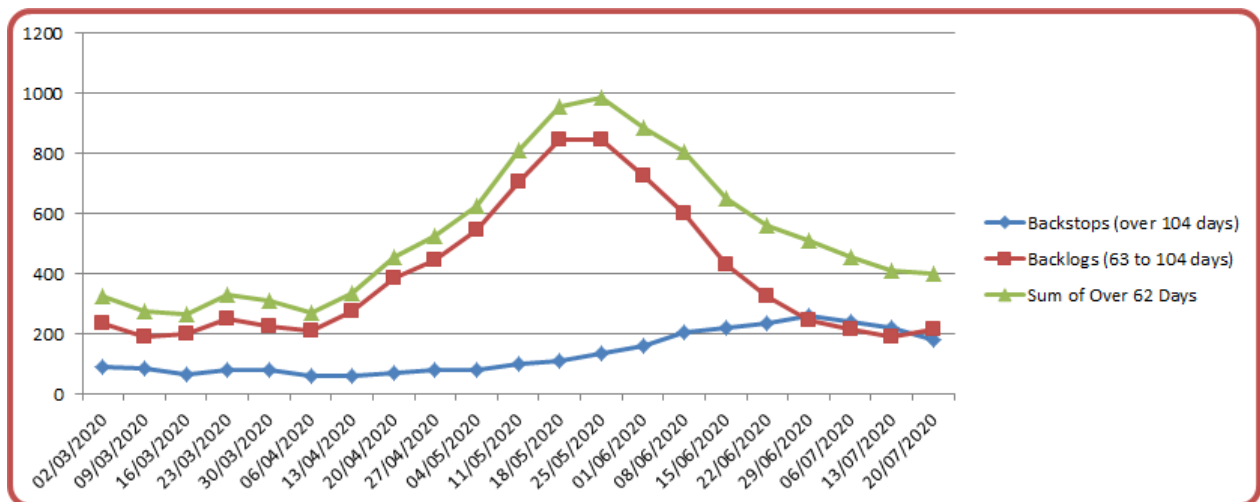
### **A message from our Medical Director, Matt Hayes:**

It could of course be argued that the arrival of a global pandemic was not required to prove the resilience and sense of purpose of the NHS and those working within it.

Nevertheless, arrive it did, and the NHS has not only risen to the challenge but has responded with alacrity and an innovative spirit.

The provision of cancer services in Wessex exemplifies this perfectly. As lock-down hit at the end of March the impact on cancer pathways was profound, as reflected in the reduction in referrals seen at that point, and there was real concern about the potential threat of much longer waits for investigation and treatment which might prove very difficult to mitigate.

However, the incredible hard work of our cancer teams, and the exemplary collaboration with colleagues in the independent sector hospitals, means that our cancer waiting times performance, whilst still showing room for further improvement, is being restored to pre-Covid levels as you will see in the data chart below. There is still much to do (particularly in endoscopy pathways, on which we are focused) and a possible 'second wave' weighs heavily on our minds, but this is a magnificent achievement for all concerned - thank you to all your teams for this.



In other areas of our work program, the work of the Alliance has continued with a real sense that the delivery of our ambitions is more important than ever.

I particularly wanted to highlight, with gratitude, the work so many people have exerted in support of the development of the PTL dashboard, the Wessex Cancer Surgical Hub, the new Rapid Diagnosis Service, and the [Cancer Matters Wessex](#) patient website, the last of which launched on the day of writing.



These very different strands of our work have been delivered quickly, in a spirit of friendly collaboration, and against the odds, and all will impact significantly on our ability to continue to deliver our aims.

Those of a cautiously optimistic mindset (always, I believe, the best policy) will share my sense that the wider sense of 'team' which this experience has bequeathed us puts us in the best position to succeed in providing cancer services with outcomes and experience we would all wish to see for our families and friends, and of which we can be really proud.

I very much look forward to continuing to work with you all, whatever the autumn and winter has in store for us!

### National Information

- **Specialty guidance for cancer** is being published here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/other-resources/specialty-guides/>

### Contact us

If you need to contact Wessex Cancer Alliance, please email: [england.wessexcanceralliance@nhs.net](mailto:england.wessexcanceralliance@nhs.net)