

Media Release

25 April 2016

Don't forget to screen NHS Mid Essex is supporting Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

This month (April), NHS Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has been supporting the national Bowel Cancer Awareness campaign to encourage those with symptoms to make an appointment with their GP.

As the awareness month comes to a close, the CCG want to encourage as many people as possible to continue checking for symptoms and to also to encourage those aged between 60 and 74 years old, who are automatically invited to a screening every two years, to attend their appointments.

Those who have a higher risk of getting bowel cancer can have the test at a younger age and are advised to speak to their GP if they have any of the symptoms or are worried about bowel cancer.

Figures show that bowel cancer incidence rates have increased by 14 per cent in Great Britain since the late 1970s.

Dr Elizabeth Towers, CCG Clinical Lead for Cancer and End of Life Care, said: "Bowel cancer is very treatable if caught in the early stages. Those who display any symptoms should visit their GP as soon as possible – and although some patients may feel embarrassed, GPs are used to seeing people with bowel problems."

The main symptoms to look for are:

- Bleeding from your bottom and/or blood in your poo. This can often be explained by haemorrhoids but can indicate a blockage caused by a tumour
- Changes in bowel habits lasting three weeks or more
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme, unexplained tiredness
- A pain or lump in your tummy.

The earlier bowel cancer is diagnosed, the higher the survival rate is. The outlook for patients with bowel cancer has improved a lot in the last 40 years with regular bowel screening being shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by 16 per cent in the population offered screening.*

Issued by the Communications and Engagement team, Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group

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****Five year survival rates:**

	Men	Women
Stage 1	95%	100%
Stage 2	80%	90%
Stage 3	63%	63%
Stage 4	7%	8%

For more information about bowel cancer please go to www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk

ENDS

Notes to editor:

*Figures taken from Achieving World Class Outcomes: (A Strategy for England 2015-2020)

****The five year survival rates** are from CRUK-**Please note** that no national statistics are available for different stages of cancer or treatments that people may have had. The statistics we present here are pulled together from a variety of different sources, including the opinions and experience of the experts who check our information. We give statistics because people ask us for them. But they are only intended as a general guide and cannot tell you about your individual outcome)
<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/type/bowel-cancer/treatment/statistics-and-outlook-for-bowel-cancer>

Bowel cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the UK and affects both men and woman and increases with age.

Bowel cancer screening

- In England bowel cancer screening is offered every two years from aged 60-74 years
- Those eligible for screening will automatically receive a screening kit in the post when they are 60 years old
- GPs do NOT have access to these screening kits. Therefore, if you have received one and misplaced it you can request a free kit by ringing: 08007076060
- More information about bowel cancer screening can be found here:
<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/bowel-cancer-screening/Pages/FAQs.aspx>

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