



## Northern Cancer Alliance urological cancers campaign communication toolkit

September 2021

### The Northern Cancer Alliance's urological cancers regional campaign launches during Urology Awareness Month.

The Northern Cancer Alliance has launched its public awareness campaign, with the tag line **"Problem peeing... you need seeing"**, to encourage people across the North East and North Cumbria to talk to their GP or nurse if they are concerned about signs or symptoms of cancer. More information can be [found here](#).

We would appreciate your support to amplify the campaign information within your networks to help us reach as many people as possible with these important messages. To make this as easy as possible, please find below some readymade content for distribution via your communications channels, this toolkit includes social media content and imagery, newsletter copy and a website/intranet copy.

### Social media content

Please follow us on social media and tag us in your posts. You can find us on Twitter at [@NorthernCancer](#) and on Facebook at [@NorthernCancerAlliance](#)

Post copy	Asset
<p>Do you have a problem peeing? Then you need seeing. Don't delay speaking to your GP if you are worried about possible signs of cancer. We're supporting @NorthernCancer's urological cancers awareness campaign.</p> <p>Find out more: <a href="https://bit.ly/NCAurology">https://bit.ly/NCAurology</a> #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing</p>	<p><b>NCA problem peeing.png</b></p>
<p>It's important be aware of the common symptoms linked to urological cancers. If you have any of these symptoms, contact your GP as soon as possible.</p> <p>Read more via @NorthernCancer: <a href="https://bit.ly/NCAurology">https://bit.ly/NCAurology</a> #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing</p>	<p><b>NCA urology symptoms.png</b></p>



<p>The NHS is here for you when you need it. Please don't delay seeking medical advice if you've noticed possible symptoms of urological #cancers, contact your GP or nurse today.</p> <p>Read more about @NorthernCancer's #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing campaign: <a href="https://bit.ly/NCaurology">https://bit.ly/NCaurology</a></p>	<p><b>NCA spotting early.png</b></p>  <p>The thumbnail features the NHS Northern Cancer Alliance logo in the top right corner. The main text reads "Spotting cancer early saves lives" in green, with "#ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing" below it. At the bottom, there are website and social media handles: www.northerncanceralliance.nhs.uk and @NorthernCancer.</p>
<p>Have you noticed any changes when you go for a wee? Watch this film with Dr @DarrenLeaning explaining the possible symptoms of urological cancers &amp; why it's important to seek medical advice <a href="https://youtu.be/4E2zAUdSK8">https://youtu.be/4E2zAUdSK8</a> #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing @NorthernCancer</p>	<p>&lt; YOUTUBE LINK WILL CREATE THUMBNAIL IMAGE &gt;</p>
<p>Diagnosing cancer early saves lives. Former @SunderlandAFC footballer Maurice Hepworth has shared his personal experience of prostate cancer in support of @NorthernCancer's urological cancers campaign. Here's his story 🖱️  <a href="https://youtu.be/ilSkGMIUCJk">https://youtu.be/ilSkGMIUCJk</a> #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing</p>	<p>&lt; YOUTUBE LINK WILL CREATE THUMBNAIL IMAGE &gt;</p>
<p>A series of films encouraging people to seek medical advice if they notice any symptoms of urological cancers have been created to support communities speaking Farsi, Arabic, Mirpuri and Urdu as part of the #ProblemPeeingYouNeedSeeing campaign from @NorthernCancer <a href="https://bit.ly/NCaurology">https://bit.ly/NCaurology</a></p>	<p><b>NCA problem peeing.png</b></p>  <p>The thumbnail features the NHS Northern Cancer Alliance logo in the top right corner. The main text reads "Problem peeing... you need seeing." in green. At the bottom, there are website and social media handles: www.northerncanceralliance.nhs.uk and @NorthernCancer.</p>

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### Newsletter copy (short)

#### Urology cancer awareness campaign backed by former footballer and legendary TV pundit

Cancer specialists are urging people across the region to see their GP if they are worried about symptoms that could be linked to urological cancers, as figures show urgent referrals for suspected urological cancers have dropped during the pandemic.



The Northern Cancer Alliance has launched its public awareness campaign with the tag line “Problem peeing... you need seeing” during Urology Awareness Month this month (September).

Legendary football pundit Jeff Stelling, who is an ambassador for Prostate Cancer UK, has backed the campaign and former Sunderland AFC footballer, Maurice Hepworth, has shared his personal experiences of prostate cancer to help raise awareness of the possible signs and symptoms of urological cancers.

Find out more about the Northern Cancer Alliance’s public awareness campaign and access useful resources and information about urological cancers at: <https://bit.ly/NCAurology>

**ENDS**

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### **Website/Intranet copy (long)**

#### **Urological cancer awareness campaign backed by former footballer and legendary TV pundit**

Urgent referrals for suspected urological cancers in the North East and North Cumbria have dropped during the pandemic, prompting cancer specialists to urge people to seek medical advice if they have any symptoms.

Over the last 18 months, there has been a significant reduction in the number of patients presenting to primary care with symptoms suggestive of urological cancers.

Analysis of figures has shown the number of urgent referrals by GPs in the region in 2020/21 fell by 23.9% (from 11,696 to 8,899) compared to the same period in 2019/20 .

The number of people receiving treatment for a urological cancer in the North East and North Cumbria in 2019/20 was 3,380 compared with 2,531 in 2020/21.

Cancer specialists are now urging people to look out for the possible signs and symptoms of urological cancers during Urology Awareness Month.

The Northern Cancer Alliance has launched its public awareness campaign, with the tag line “Problem peeing... you need seeing”, to encourage people across the region to talk to their GP or nurse if they are concerned about signs or symptoms of cancer.

Urological cancers include bladder, prostate, kidney, testicular and penile cancer. Symptoms can include difficulty and/or pain when passing urine, blood in the urine, a need to pass urine more frequently particularly during the night, a swelling or lump in the area of the kidney, fevers and night sweats, tiredness, unexplained weight loss, muscle spasms in the bladder, a lump or swelling in one testicle which may or may not be accompanied by an ache or heavy sensation, changes to the skin on the penis including thickening, growths, sores or a rash.



**Former Sunderland AFC footballer Maurice Hepworth** has shared his experience of prostate cancer in a bid to raise awareness of the condition and to encourage others to be aware of the symptoms. Maurice, 67, from Sunderland, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in November 2017 after noticing changes in the frequency of urination, the pressure when he did go and experiencing some pain.

He said: “When I noticed the symptoms I contacted my doctor and who saw me pretty quickly. I had a blood test and I was referred to a consultant who put me on a fast-track cancer pathway. I had all the tests done within three weeks and it was after these that I was told that I needed to undergo surgery or I was going to die.”

The father-of-six, who has nine grandchildren, is now in his fourth year recovering from level 4 prostate cancer.

“From start to finish the clinical teams I’ve worked with have been incredible. The NHS has saved my life. I know people, men in particular, can feel scared to contact their doctor through fear of being told they might have cancer. And there’s the pride and the masculinity element of not wanting to have someone examine or do tests on their private areas – and I totally get that but it needs to change.

“If by telling my story I can get one person to go and speak to their doctor about any cancer worries or concerns, then I will be happy. Try and put aside your pride and your fear that it might change your life, because it could save your life,” Maurice added.

**Football pundit Jeff Stelling**, who is an ambassador for Prostate Cancer UK, has also added his support to the campaign.

He said: “Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. One in eight men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime. You’re more likely to get prostate cancer if you’re aged 50 or over, you’re black, or your father or brother has had it. Most men with early prostate cancer don’t have any symptoms but if you experience problems peeing, you need seeing so speak to your GP.”

Cancer specialists believe the drop in the number of urgent referrals for urological cancers could be because many of the early symptoms of urological cancers can be deemed by the public to be age-related and because people are reluctant to contact their GP at a time when the NHS is perceived to be under extreme pressure.

At the beginning of the pandemic in April last year, referrals for urological cancers dropped by 62.9% when compared with the same period in 2019. Although referral rates have demonstrated a recovery over the last year, they have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Dr Darren James Leaning, Northern Cancer Alliance Clinical Lead for Urological Cancers and Consultant Clinical Oncologist at South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said:** “It’s concerning to see the drop in referrals for urological cancers across the region, and while they have been steadily increasing over the last year, they’re not where we would like them to be.

“It’s important for people to be aware of the common symptoms linked to urological cancers. These can include going for a wee more frequently, not getting to the toilet on time, the flow of urine not feeling quite the same, feeling unable to empty the bladder fully, a change of colour of the urine, blood in the urine, or for men, noticing a change in erectile function.



“If anyone has any of these symptoms, then we’re urging them to see their GP as soon as possible. Changes to your waterworks do not necessarily mean you have cancer, but the chances are that we can help and if the changes are due to cancer, the sooner we act upon the symptoms, the sooner we can start the necessary treatment. Remember, if you have a problem peeing, you need seeing.”

**Dr Patrick Wright, Primary Care Lead for Prostate Cancer for the Northern Cancer Alliance, said:**

“The last 18 months have been incredibly challenging, and we understand there may be some hesitancy from the public to contact their GP for a matter they may not think is urgent.

“During the pandemic, significantly fewer men have been to see their GP about suspected prostate cancer across the North East and North Cumbria. However, GP practices and the wider NHS are open and are here to help anyone who has any worries or concerns about possible signs of symptoms of cancer.

“We want people to feel comfortable when they access NHS support and most GP surgeries now offer phone and video consultations, as well as face-to-face appointments. Please do not delay seeking medical advice if you think you may have cancer symptoms.”

Find out more about the Northern Cancer Alliance’s public awareness campaign and access useful resources and information about urological cancers at: <https://bit.ly/NCAurology>

**ENDS**

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