
Targeted Lung Health Checks – Information for Croydon GPs

Overview

Targeted lung health checks (TLHC) are now being offered in Croydon to support with the early detection and treatment of lung cancer. The service is being delivered through a partnership between InHealth and local NHS Trusts.

The TLHC team will invite eligible patients from participating practices on behalf of GPs:

- **Letters** will be sent to your patients aged 55-74 who are recorded as current or former smokers. These patients will then be contacted within 14 days to complete the assessment over the telephone.
- **Open letters** will be sent to your patients aged 55-74 without a recorded smoking status, with information on how to book an assessment if they have a smoking history.

The telephone assessment uses two validated questionnaires to review patient risk of developing lung cancer. This takes approximately 15 minutes. Patients who meet the risk threshold will be invited for a low dose chest CT scan at a mobile scanning unit in the Asda Wallington Superstore car park.

Rationale and Background

TLHCs help detect cancer at an early stage when curative treatment is more likely to be possible. Lung cancer often goes undetected during its early stages, as there are often no signs or symptoms:

- Less than 20% of people diagnosed with lung cancer survive for 5 years or more due to late-stage diagnosis.
- To date, 80% of lung cancers found by our TLHC programme have been stage 1 or stage 2, compared to 30% of lung cancers diagnosed through other established routes.

The TLHC programme targets those most at risk of lung cancer based on their age and smoking history and is initially being made available in areas that have some of the highest recorded rates of smoking. We estimate that 34,000 people living in Croydon will be eligible for the programme.

Programme History

- Following successful international and national pilots, RM Partners ran a pilot in Hammersmith & Fulham and Hillingdon during 2018-19 provided by the Royal Brompton Hospital.
- From 2021 we joined the NHS England TLHC pilot and expanded the programme into Hounslow, Merton, Sutton, and Wandsworth.
- The programme is now on a trajectory to full roll-out across England by 2028 and has been recommended to become a national cancer screening programme by the UK National Screening Committee.

How you can support the programme

We need your help to raise awareness of the programme and educate the public on the importance of detecting lung cancer early.

Data collected from the local programme's non-attendee survey shows the most common reasons given for non-attendance is people felt they '**did not need or see the benefit of a lung health check**' or had been '**invited by mistake**'.

You can help support this programme by:

- Having opportunistic discussions with eligible patients, to help them make an informed decision about having a lung health check when invited.
- Coding the smoking status of patients if not already done. A correct smoking status is key for invitations to be sent out to eligible patients.
- Directing those eligible for a check to more information on our lung health check website [<https://lunghealthchecks-westlondon.nhs.uk>].
- Adding information about lung health checks to your practice website.
- Displaying posters, flyers and leaflets in your practice waiting room. You can view and download this material [here](#).
- Displaying a digital slide about the programme on waiting room screens. You can download digital slides [here](#).
- More info about the programme can be found [here](#).

Please note: eligible patients in Croydon can make an appointment for a lung health check by calling the Booking Office on 020 3835 1600.

Further information

[West London Lung Health Checks](#)

[lunghealthchecks-westlondon.nhs.uk]

[NHS England Lung Health Checks](#)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/lung-health-checks]

[InHealth](#)

[inhealthgroup.com/lung-health-checks]

[Lung Health Checks Resources](#)

[rmpartners.nhs.uk/publications-and-resources/targeted-lung-health-check-resources]

Supporting information for clinicians

- Patients with normal/no significant CT findings on the first scan will be invited every 2 years for an interval scan until they 'age out' of the programme at age 75, as per the national protocol.
- The TLHC team will book follow up scans for those with lung nodules identified on CT (3- or 12-month repeats).
- All abnormal CT results will be reviewed by the screening review meeting (SRM) in line with the protocols of the TLHC programme.
- SRMs will action all significant abnormal CT findings, including onward referral for lung cancer and other respiratory conditions.
- The only CT findings to be passed back to GP practices will be **non-urgent incidental** CT scan findings and SRM clinicians will provide advice to practices. The tolerance for referral back to primary care is high.

Coronary artery calcification: advice and guidance

- If the patient is known to have coronary artery disease (previous myocardial infarction, abnormal coronary angiogram, coronary angioplasty or stenting or coronary artery bypass grafting) and is already taking secondary preventative measures, no further action is necessary.
- If the patient has no prior diagnosis of coronary artery disease, the team will recommend that the patient has an appointment in primary care to discuss any symptoms and review their risk factors for coronary artery disease. (Cardiovascular disease: risk assessment and reduction, including lipid modification NICE CG181 updated 24 May 2023).