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'Blood in Pee': How practice managers can support the new national campaign

This autumn the NHS is launching a campaign to raise awareness of blood in urine as a symptom of bladder and kidney cancers. More lives could be saved if people were diagnosed at an earlier stage.

What is *Be Clear on Cancer*?

Be Clear on Cancer aims to improve early diagnosis of cancer by raising awareness of symptoms and encouraging more people to see their GP earlier.

What is the main message of the new campaign?

The message for the public is: **If you notice blood in your pee, even if it's 'just the once', tell your doctor.**

What activities will be taking place and when?

Adverts will appear on national TV, radio and in the press from 15 October to 20 November 2013. There will be events in public places, like shopping centres; a direct mail letter and leaflet will also be sent to people in key areas across England.

Who is the 'Blood in Pee' campaign aimed at?

Men and women from lower socioeconomic groups **over the age of 50** and the people that influence them, such as friends and family.

Why focus on the symptom 'blood in pee'?

Visible blood in urine is a key symptom in over 80% of bladder cancers and over half of kidney cancers. But when asked to name cancer signs and symptoms, only 33% of people mention unexplained bleeding. People need to know that if they have this symptom they should see their GP as soon as possible.

Are there other symptoms of bladder and kidney cancer?

Blood in urine is the most common symptom, but there are others. A full list of bladder and kidney cancer signs and symptoms is available on NHS Choices.

What impact will the new campaign have on my practice?

The North of England Cancer Network saw a positive response from the public during the regional pilot campaign in the Tyne Tees and Borders TV regions, so you are likely to see more people coming to your practice. GP attendance data from that pilot will be available later this year, but results from one of the local 'Blood in Pee' pilots in 2012 showed an overall increase in the number of patients presenting with blood in urine (haematuria) during the campaign. Across 17 practices this equated to a maximum of around one extra patient per practice every two weeks.

It's difficult to predict the exact increase, but the national bowel campaign in January–March 2012 focused on a more common symptom and the number of extra visits across 355 practices also equated to approximately one additional patient with relevant symptoms per practice every two weeks.

Three things you can do

1 Brief colleagues

2 Expect and plan for an increase in activity

3 Promote the new campaign

Key bladder and kidney cancer facts

- **If kidney and bladder cancers are diagnosed at the earliest stage, one-year survival is as high as 92–97%. At a late stage, it drops to just 25–34%**
- **Each year around 16,600 people in England are diagnosed with bladder and kidney cancers and around 7,500 people will die from them**

Is there any evidence that the 'Blood in Pee' campaign will work?

Three local pilots in 2012 have shown encouraging results:

- 23% increase in 2 Week Wait (2WW) referrals for suspected urological cancer in the pilot area*
- Total cystoscopy figures for 18 PCTs covered by the local pilots indicate a 5.9% increase compared with the same months in 2011
- 5.3% increase in the number of bladder or kidney cancers diagnosed following a 2WW urgent referral for suspected urological cancer within the pilot area

The regional pilot campaign that ran from January to March 2013 in the Tyne Tees and Borders TV regions has also been positive:

- The percentage of respondents saying they would see the GP the same day if they noticed any changes to pee or bladder habits significantly increased from 18% before the campaign to 27% after; this was particularly the case for men, where the increase was from 21% to 32%
- Knowledge of blood in urine as a definite warning sign of kidney/bladder cancer significantly increased amongst the target audience from 41% before the campaign to 65% after; this increase was seen in both men and women
- 28% increase in 2WW referrals for suspected urological cancer*

*Pathway covers several urological cancer types in addition to kidney and bladder

Why does this new national campaign need our support?

Estimates suggest that around 1,000 deaths from these two cancers could be avoided in England each year. That's why we need to encourage people with this symptom to overcome any embarrassment or worries they may have and visit their GP without delay. Unexplained blood in urine needs investigating, whatever the cause might be. To make this campaign a success, we need your practice team to be aware of it and to talk about it with colleagues and patients.

How do I order 'Blood in Pee' campaign materials to put up in our surgery?

You can order leaflets and posters free of charge at orderline.dh.gov.uk or by ringing 0300 123 1002.

'When the regional 'Blood in Pee' campaign ran in our area earlier this year, we put up posters and leaflets around the surgery and I made sure the whole team was familiar with the campaign. By briefing everyone, so our receptionists knew to expect more requests for appointments and our GPs knew that more people might be coming in with the key symptoms, we were able to manage any extra patients or referrals without any problems.'

Georgie Gilfillan, Practice Manager, Sunderland

Three things you can do to get your practice ready for the campaign

1 Brief colleagues. Your whole team needs to be aware of this campaign and why it's running – tell your patient groups too. There is a separate briefing sheet for [GPs](#) and for [nurses](#), so make sure your team knows they're available. Encourage everyone to watch the TV adverts on [NHS Choices](#) to understand what your patients will see during the campaign. Tell receptionists that there may be an increase in the number of patients wanting appointments.

2 Expect and plan for an increase in activity. As this campaign hasn't run nationally before, it's difficult to predict exactly how many more patients will come through your doors. But be prepared for an increase in the number of people sent for diagnostic tests and referred via the urgent 2 Week Wait referral system. The North of England Cancer Network team assumed a 25–30% increase in demand on services in secondary care ahead of the regional pilot campaign and, anecdotally, we know that although there was variation across the area, this felt about right.

3 Promote the new campaign. Display posters and leaflets in your surgery, and encourage your colleagues to talk about the 'Blood in Pee' campaign. TV advertising is incredibly powerful at raising awareness of symptoms, but it is often face-to-face discussions that change behaviour. Talking might prompt someone to make an appointment or open up about their symptoms.

Find out more

- **Visit naedi.org/beclearoncancer/bloodinpee for more campaign information and resources**
- **The public-facing website for this campaign is nhs.uk/bloodinpee**