

[News story: New data links route to cancer diagnosis and treatment](#)

New data from Public Health England (PHE) illustrates how the way that cancer patients are diagnosed may affect their treatment options.

The national data links individual patients' route to diagnosis, including screening, GP referrals, and emergency presentations, with the treatment patients go on to receive.

Those diagnosed through screening were likely to have the most treatment options available and receive treatments aimed at curing the cancer, in particular surgery to completely remove the tumour. This strongly supports the benefits of screening as a way of diagnosing cancer early, which evidence suggests leads to better patient outcomes, ultimately saving lives.

Compared to patients who were diagnosed through an emergency presentation, those diagnosed through screening, GP referral, or following an urgent 2-week referral saw more potentially curative treatment.

While the percentage of cancers diagnosed through emergency presentations is improving – falling from 24% in 2006 to 20% in 2015 – the data shows 44% of breast, colon and rectal cancer patients diagnosed in this way may miss out on potentially curative treatments compared to those who are detected through a screening programme.

Dr Jem Rashbass, cancer lead at Public Health England said:

This new data allows us to see clearly how the route through which someone is diagnosed with cancer affects the treatment that they go on to receive. It reinforces the importance of early diagnosis, be that through screening or GP referral – the earlier you get diagnosed with cancer the better.

It's important to be aware of any unexplained changes to your body, such as the sudden appearance of a lump, blood in your urine, or a change to your usual bowel habits. If you have any concerns, always speak to your GP.

The latest data publication builds on the knowledge of PHE's national cancer registry. It follows the recent release of [data published in partnership with Cancer Research UK](#) that shows how chemotherapy, radiotherapy and surgery rates vary for different groups of patients in England. The cancer data service has also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with China's cancer services to support the development of a national cancer database in China, continuing the service's reputation as the leading cancer database in the world.

PHE's [Be Clear on Cancer](#) campaign continues to drive awareness around key symptoms; encouraging everyone to think, act and treat early.