

Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 15th November 2023 Tackling breast cancer in Hackney - discussion meeting	Item No 4
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PURPOSE

To discuss with key stakeholders the challenges around tackling breast cancer in Hackney. This would encompass - the latest data, the performance of the screening programme and efficacy of current breast awareness programmes in ensuring early diagnosis. The aim of the session is to explore what is being done locally, what more can be done and how partnership working here might be enhanced.

CONTEXT *(data from Public Health)*

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in the UK.

- It accounts for almost one in five newly diagnosed cancers in City and Hackney (123 residents were diagnosed in 2018).
- As of December 2020, there were almost 1,600 people living with breast cancer locally (44% of all people living with cancer).

The majority of people diagnosed with breast cancer are women over the age of 50, but it also affects younger women and (rarely) men.

- One in seven women will be diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Breast cancer is the most common cause of cancer in females aged 15 and over; over a third of women in Hackney are diagnosed under the age of 50 and it is the leading cause of death among female Hackney residents aged under 49 (and one of the main causes of death among women aged 50+).
- Locally, less than 1% of breast cancer diagnoses are in males.

PAPERS

Attached please find papers from:

4b Public Health

4c Central and East London Breast Screening Service

4d NE London Cancer Alliance

4e to g City and Hackney Cancer Collaborative (local GPs)

4h CoppaFee! (VCS org)

FORMAT

This is a Discussion item so the format will be brief introductions to the papers submitted followed by a Q&A with the Commission Members.

CONTRIBUTORS

Role	Organisation	Job title	Name
The Alliance	NEL Cancer Alliance (part of NHS NEL)	Early Diagnosis Prog Lead Managing Director	Caroline Cook Femi Odewale
Screening service	Central and East London Breast Screening Service	Lead Breast Cancer Nurse Health Promotional Lead	Clare Mabena, Dr Mansi Tara
Public Health	Hackney Council/ City of London Corporation	Director of Public Health Consultant in Public Health	Dr Sandra Husbands Jayne Taylor
Secondary care	Barts Health NHS Trust	Consultant Medical Oncologist in Breast Cancer	Dr Katherine Hawkesford
	Homerton Healthcare	Lead Nurse - Cancer	Mary Flatley
Primary care	City and Hackney Cancer Collaborative	Chair. Local GP Cancer Facilitator	Dr Reshma Shah Jessica Lewsey
3rd sector	CoppaFeel!	Head of Services Health Information Manager Director of Education & Health Communications	Helen Farrant Emma Walker Sophie Dopierala-Bull

DIMENSIONS TO EXPLORE

a) **Screening criteria** are all set nationally and neither Public Health nor NHS NEL can apply local criteria or run local pilots to target certain cohorts.

b) The most effective tool to ensure early diagnosis among young breast cancer patients is to **promote breast awareness** so that cancers are found and diagnosed as early as possible. This involves enhancing public understanding that breast cancer can happen to people of any gender, age, or ethnicity, as well as awareness of breast cancer signs and symptoms, the significance of regular self-checks, and how to conduct them.

c) It is noted that **Black women** are typically diagnosed with breast cancer at a much younger age than White women (48 versus 60). This is significant considering that national screening commences at 50, which is two years after the average age of breast cancer diagnosis among black women. Likewise members of the Ashkenazi Jewish community are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer at an earlier age due to the prevalence of the BRCA gene within their community.

d) The concern therefore is that the current blanket breast screening programme might be missing key cohorts and thus **exacerbating health inequalities** in certain populations.

e) Homerton Healthcare has also been observing an increasing incidence of breast cancer among younger women locally. The local data shows that 12.6% of women living with or beyond breast cancer are under 49 in North East London, compared to the national average of 7.8%. This indicates a specific challenge with breast cancer in younger individuals in our region.

ACTION

The Commission is requested to give consideration to the reports and discussion and make any recommendations as necessary.