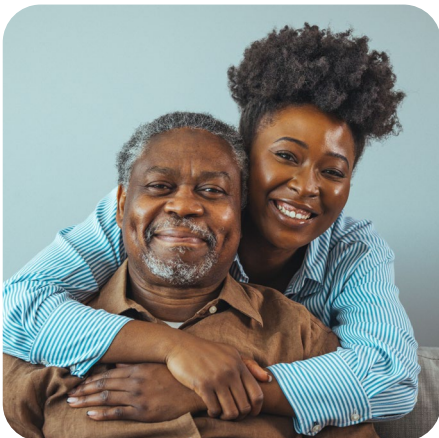
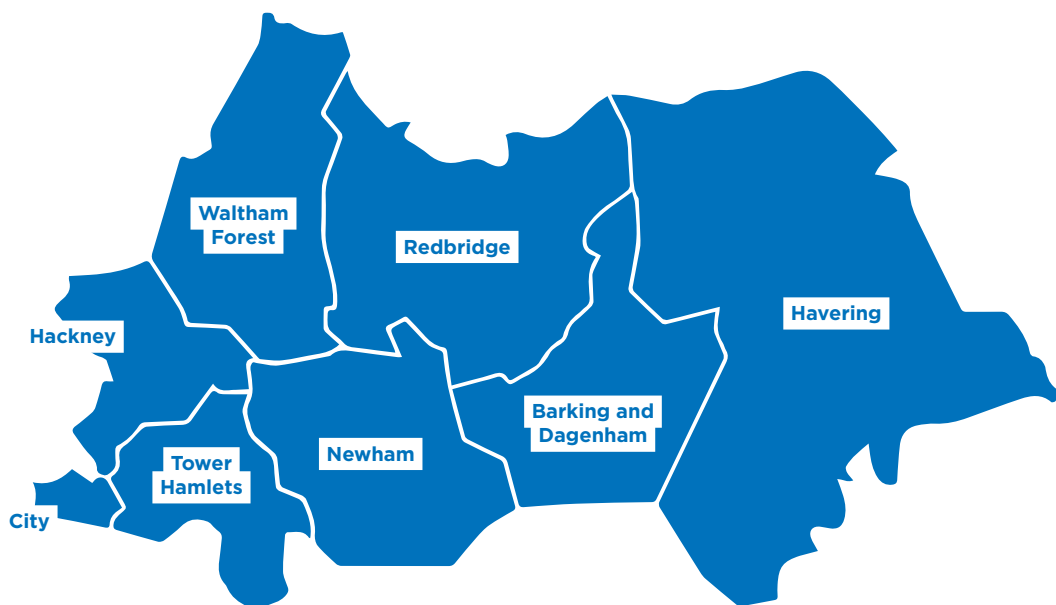


The unpaid carers guide to cancer services in north east London





Improving local cancer services

We are committed to improving cancer outcomes and reducing inequalities for local people. Our aim is that you and the person you care for have equal access to better cancer services so that we can help to:

- Prevent cancer
- Spot cancer sooner
- Provide the right treatment at the right time
- Support people and families affected by cancer

We work with patients, residents, carers, hospitals, GP practices, health and care professionals, local authorities and community and voluntary organisations across north east London.



How to lower your risk of cancer

Not every cancer is preventable, but there are six key things you can do to help reduce your risk of getting cancer:



Not smoking



Eating and drinking healthily



Not drinking alcohol



Keeping active



Keeping a healthy weight



Staying safe in the sun

Make the most of the information and services out there to help keep you healthy and reduce your cancer risk.

Visit our webpage for links to a range of advice and information:
www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/preventing-cancer/reducing-your-risk-cancer

Use your free local support services
www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/local-support-services

SCAN ME to watch a video by unpaid carers about the importance of prioritising your health

Open the camera on your smartphone, point it at the code and then tap the link that appears. Or visit:

youtu.be/dlUr5bEeNqE



Signs and symptoms

Key signs and symptoms to look out for:



Blood in your poo or pee



A cough for more than 3 weeks



Blood when you cough or vomit



Shortness of breath



Bleeding between periods



Weight loss which cannot be explained by changes to your diet, exercise or stress



Diarrhoea, constipation or bloating for no obvious reason



Changes to moles, such as, changes to shape, colour or size or if it becomes itchy, flaky, crusty or bleeds



An unexplained pain or lump

If you or the person you are caring for have any of these symptoms it does not mean that you definitely have cancer, but you should seek your GP's advice. If you do need any treatment, it is more likely to be simpler and more effective if you are diagnosed early. It's important to also prioritise your health when caring for someone.



If you have any signs or symptoms you are worried about, contact your GP as soon as possible. Make sure you tell them everything; make a note of your symptoms and take it with you.

Don't have a doctor? Anyone in England can register with a GP surgery and it's free to register. You do not need proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number. Ensure your GP surgery has you listed as a carer. This will help them to understand the additional needs you have when booking appointments.

Be prepared...

To provide all the info your surgery needs when you call, here are some questions you might be asked. Give them some thought before you call, even jot down your answers here so you don't forget anything vital.

1 What's wrong and whereabouts is the problem?

2 Can you describe your symptoms?

3 How long has it been like this?

4 Has it got any worse?

5 Do you have any family history of illness?

Screening programmes

Screening is safe, simple and saves lives. It is also free, so take every opportunity when you are offered it! Please remember, you can attend screening appointments and GP appointments with the person you're caring for.

Here are the main screening programmes in England:

**Part of
the body**

Who can take part?

**How do you get an
appointment?**



Bowel

Anyone aged 50-74

You are automatically sent the test kit in the post when it is your turn



Breast

50-70 year olds who have breasts, due to either naturally occurring oestrogen or oestrogen hormone therapy.

You are sent an invitation letter in the post when it is your turn with the date, time and location of your appointment



Cervix

Women and people with a cervix aged 25-64

You are sent an invitation letter in the post when it is your turn with details on how to book your appointment

How often?

Where does it take place?

More information

2 yearly
(on request over 74)

You take the test at home and send it back using the information provided

nhs.uk/conditions/bowel-cancer-screening

Once every 3 years
(on request over 71)

At dedicated screening sites across north east London by a female mammographer

london-breastscreening.org.uk

25-49 year olds: every 3 years
50-64 year olds: every 5 years

Usually at a local GP practice by a female nurse or doctor

nhs.uk/conditions/cervical-screening

What happens if your doctor thinks you might have cancer?

After seeing your doctor, you may have to go for further tests or treatment. You will usually receive details of any appointments by letter in the post directly from the hospital.

It is really important you attend these appointments.

Please make sure you:

...are available for 4-6 weeks after your doctor refers you for further tests or treatment

...are ready for your treatment, which should start within 2 months of your GP referring you

...do everything possible to make your appointment



...let us know as soon as possible if you can't attend so we can book another one for you

...read any information you are sent and let us know if there is anything you are unsure of or don't understand

Support for people living with cancer

All residents in north east London living with cancer should have access to high quality care that is personalised to their individual needs. This is from the moment a cancer is **diagnosed**, all the way through your **treatment**, and **post treatment**.

In addition, you should expect the following within a certain time period after your treatment starts.

+3

Months
after
treatment

Cancer Care Review with your GP

A conversation between a patient and their GP or Practice Nurse about their cancer journey. It is essential to providing care which meets the needs of the individual.

+12

Months
after
treatment

Structured Cancer Care Review with your GP

A further conversation between a patient and their GP or Practice Nurse about their cancer journey. It is essential to providing care which meets the needs of the individual.

+18

Months
after
treatment

Quality of Life Survey

Sent via post to ask you about your experiences so that improvements can be made to services.



Your personalised cancer journey

1

Cancer Diagnosis

Your GP, hospital consultant or practice nurse will give you your results and explain what they mean.

✓ Treatment Plan

Agreement on what treatment will be best for you, along with timelines and support. Please make sure you attend all your appointments.

✓ Holistic Needs Assessment

A simple questionnaire to highlight your most important issues and can help create your care and support plan.

✓ Personalised care and support plan

Provides your personal health and wellbeing information and support. This could include connecting with others in a similar situation to yours and advice on telling family and friends.

✓ Prehabilitation

Service to improve your mental health and wellbeing, your diet and your fitness, helping you be as healthy as possible before your treatment, which gives you the best chance of success and recovery.

2

Treatment begins

Your cancer treatment should begin within 2 months of your cancer diagnosis.

✓ Reducing the impact of treatment

Helping you deal with common side effects of cancer treatment, such as lymphoedema, helping you improve your quality of life.

✓ Health and wellbeing events

Helping you connect with others going through cancer treatment

✓ Psychosocial support

Services and activities such as counselling, education, spiritual support, group support, and other services to improve your health and wellbeing.



Post treatment

Following your treatment there is a range of support that you will continue to receive.

✓ End of treatment Holistic Needs Assessment

A follow-up questionnaire to highlight your most important issues and concerns

✓ Treatment Summary

Completed by cancer professionals in your hospital after a significant phase of your cancer treatment. It describes the treatment, potential side effects, and signs and symptoms of recurrence.

✓ Rehabilitation

Helps you restore and maintain physical and mental health and wellbeing after your cancer treatment.

✓ Follow up Treatment Plan

Also known as Personalised Stratified Follow-Up. This is a plan which is personal to you to look after you after your cancer treatment. It includes things like regular surveillance scans or tests, rapid re-access to your cancer team (including telephone advice and support), information about signs and symptoms to look out for which might suggest your cancer has returned.

✓ National Cancer Patient Experience Survey

Following your discharge from hospital after your treatment, you may be invited to take part in a national survey to give your feedback on your care.



SCAN ME to find out more



Open the camera on
your smartphone,
point it at the code
and then tap the
link that appears.
Or visit:

[www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/
unpaid-carers](http://www.nelcanceralliance.nhs.uk/unpaid-carers)

Follow us on social media

X: @CancerNEL

Facebook: @NELCancerAlliance

Instagram: @CancerNEL

YouTube: youtube.com/@nelcanceralliance

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/north-east-london-cancer-alliance

Blue Sky: cancernel.bsky.social

Spotify: Taking Control of Cancer

**Please remember to check out your local carer's
service for extra support with your caring role**