

2010

Goals report – our progress 2007–2010

2009

2008

2007

Together we will beat cancer

Our 2020 goals – Our progress



We believe the UK's cancer treatment and cancer prevention should be among the best in the world. That's why, in 2007, we set ourselves ten ambitious goals that will help us measure our success in beating cancer over the coming years.

To meet these stretching targets, we are working in partnership with other charities, the research community, government and others. Most importantly, we cannot meet these goals without the generous support of the public.

The good news is that, three years on, we have already made significant progress against many of them.

We are delighted to see that the number of people smoking has fallen to a record low. Today, there are over a million fewer smokers in the UK than in 2005, and many thousands of cases of cancer will be prevented as a result. We have also made real strides in understanding how cancer starts and develops and how this can translate into better ways of preventing, diagnosing and treating many forms of the disease. And many more people can now access treatments that are less invasive or that can more accurately target their cancer, which is great news for cancer patients.

But for other goals, there's still a long way to go.

Our target to reduce the likelihood of getting cancer before the age of 75 is very ambitious and one which is particularly challenging. And our goal to increase cancer survival rates to a point where two-thirds of people beat the disease will not be easy to achieve because cancer is such a complex disease with so many different types and subtypes.

Nevertheless, our goals remain and will continue to inspire us and challenge us for the next ten years. We are dedicated to continuing our efforts to beat cancer – now and beyond 2020. Together we will beat cancer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Harpal S Kumar'. The signature is stylized and includes a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Harpal S Kumar
Chief Executive Officer

People will know how to reduce their risk of cancer

Three-quarters of the UK public will be aware of the main lifestyle choices they can make to reduce their risk of getting cancer

Over the past three years, people's awareness of lifestyle risk factors for cancer has improved but remains low. We used specially developed questionnaires to measure our progress against this goal. In 2007, a quarter of people could list three or more risk factors such as smoking, obesity or over-exposure to the sun. In 2010, this figure rose to a third of the people surveyed. People are now also significantly more aware of the link between alcohol and cancer, an issue that has received increased media attention in the last three years.

What we've achieved

We have played key roles in two of the government's recent health campaigns. We teamed up with the British Heart Foundation and Diabetes UK to support the

Change4Life campaign, highlighting the link between obesity and cancer. And, together with other health charities, we endorsed a national campaign on the hidden dangers of alcohol. Our Cancer Awareness Roadshow – mobile units staffed by cancer nurses that bring health messages to deprived areas of the UK – is now in its fourth year and continues to go from strength to strength. And over the last three years, our SunSmart activity has been targeting teenagers and young people who are most at risk from skin cancer, raising awareness of the dangers of sunburn and sunbeds.

What next?

We are pleased with the progress made on this goal but there is a long way to go to reach our target. We will continue to work with our partners, such as other charities,

local and central government and the NHS, to communicate cancer prevention messages. And we will make further investment in activities like our Cancer Awareness Roadshow and our work with health professionals, such as family doctors and nurses, who play a vital role in advising people about healthy living.

'Our Cancer Awareness Roadshow plays an important role in promoting cancer prevention. A staggering 144,000 people have visited our units since they launched in 2006.'

Louise Bishop
Senior Health Campaigns Manager,
Cancer Research UK

The number of smokers will fall dramatically

Four million fewer adults will be smokers, preventing thousands of new cases of cancer every year

We are delighted to see that the number of smokers in Britain has fallen to its lowest ever level. Just one in five people in the UK now smoke – in fact, one million fewer adults said they were smokers in 2008 than in 2005. This encouraging news means we are likely to meet this goal by 2020, as long as a comprehensive set of measures is introduced over the next 10 years.

What we've achieved

It's now three years since England followed Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to become smokefree in public places. We played a major role in securing this landmark legislation that will help improve the health of workers and encourage smokers to quit. More recently, through our 'Out of Sight, Out of Mind' campaign, a law

has been passed to remove cigarette vending machines and tobacco displays in shops – this will help discourage young people from taking up the habit.

Looking forward

We will work with government to make sure this new law is implemented and that tobacco displays are removed from shops. And we will lobby for plain packaging of tobacco products so they're not as attractive to young people. We will continue to work with the government and other charities to do everything we can to reduce smoking rates further, such as raising awareness of the need for parents to make their homes and cars smokefree and supporting research into the most effective ways of helping smokers quit.

'England has been smokefree in public places for three years now and we're already seeing the health benefits. But there's more to do. We must keep tobacco out of sight in shops and from vending machines to protect our children.'

Jean King
Director of Tobacco Control,
Cancer Research UK

2

People under 75 will be less likely to develop cancer

3

The chances of a person developing cancer up to the age of 75 will fall from more than one in four to one in five

The risk of someone under 75 developing cancer has not changed in the three years since we launched our goals. This means our target will be very challenging to meet by 2020. Some cancers are becoming less common. But others such as prostate and skin cancer are increasing, either because of increased detection or lifestyle behaviours such as excessive sun exposure.

Our achievements

To reduce the number of people who develop cancer in later life, we particularly need to tackle cancer awareness among younger generations and introduce appropriate cancer prevention measures. Over the past three years, we played a key role in highlighting the importance of vaccinating teenagers against HPV to help

prevent cervical cancer. Latest figures show over 214,000 teenage girls in England have had all three doses of the vaccine since the government launched the programme in 2008. We have also successfully campaigned for laws to prevent children and teenagers from using sunbeds to reduce the risk of skin cancer in this age group. These laws are already in effect in Scotland and will soon come into effect in England and Wales. We are working hard to achieve the same crucial step in Northern Ireland.

Challenging next steps

To meet this goal, it's vital that we continue to invest in our cancer prevention research – from understanding risk factors to developing drugs to help prevent cancer in people at high risk. We will continue to work with

our partners to raise awareness of the link between cancer and lifestyle, helping people to make healthier choices in their daily lives – in particular around smoking, sun-exposure, alcohol and obesity.

'This is a challenging goal to meet and we need to do more to achieve it.'

Harpal Kumar
Chief Executive Officer,
Cancer Research UK

Cancer will be diagnosed earlier

4

Two-thirds of all cancer cases will be diagnosed at a stage when the cancer can be successfully treated

No national data are currently available to measure our progress against this goal. Using data from one cancer registry in the East of England, we can report that some progress is being made – around 55% of patients with a range of common cancers are diagnosed at a stage when the cancer can be successfully treated. But too many people are still dying because their cancer is diagnosed late. In fact, many thousands of lives in the UK could be saved every year if cancer was diagnosed earlier.

Our achievements

This goal will be challenging to meet but we have made substantial efforts over the past three years to address it. Together with the Department of Health, we launched a major new initiative in 2008 aimed at promoting earlier detection of cancer and reducing late diagnosis. This includes increasing public awareness of signs and symptoms that could be cancer and encouraging people to visit their family doctor if they have concerns.

We are also investing millions of pounds in research to find new methods to screen for cancers and diagnose the disease earlier using the latest imaging technologies. And there's been good news from our clinical trials too. In April 2010, results from a landmark national trial we helped support showed overwhelming benefit in using a technique called Flexi-Scope to screen people for bowel cancer. We are now campaigning for Flexi-Scope to be taken up in our national bowel cancer screening programme. And early results from another huge national trial we co-funded show there could be potential for an ovarian cancer screening programme in the coming years.

Looking forward

We will continue to do all we can to support health professionals, such as family doctors, in their management of cancer warning signs and symptoms. And we will carry on applying pressure to the NHS to make sure that information about a patient's cancer stage

at diagnosis is recorded so progress in detecting cancer early can be monitored. In the research arena, as part of our five-year strategy, we will focus our efforts on discovering and developing more markers for cancer that can be developed into tests to detect cancer early (see Goal 6).

'Early detection is the most important factor in driving up cancer survival rates.'

Professor Sir Mike Richards
National Cancer Director

We will understand how cancer starts and develops

5

We will have a detailed understanding of the causes and changes in the body in two-thirds of all cases of cancer

Technology has accelerated at a pace since 2007 and it's now possible for scientists to hunt for the gene faults that underpin cancer faster than ever before. By consulting our international experts and combining this with a comprehensive review of scientific literature, we have been able to build up a clear picture of how our understanding of cancer biology has improved in recent years. We are delighted to report there has been a significant increase in our knowledge of cancer genes in just three years, and we are confident of meeting this goal by 2020.

Our achievements

In the past three years, our scientists have led the world in pinpointing many of the genes linked to breast, bowel, prostate, lung, brain and ovarian cancers. Building on decades of

groundbreaking discoveries into the biology of cancer, our scientists continue to push the boundaries of this research. This latest knowledge is already changing how we diagnose and treat patients with cancer, and it's expected to have a major impact in the future. Since 2007, our scientists have won a record number of high-profile awards and honours, highlighting the quality of their research and the progress they are making.

Building on this success

Going forward, we will invest further in exceptional research to unravel the role of different genes and molecules in cancer development, and complete more pieces of the jigsaw. We will play a key role in the International Cancer Genome Consortium, which is studying the genetic make-up of

thousands of different cancer samples. Our effort as part of this global project will focus particularly on prostate and oesophageal cancer. And we will continue to support our scientists by providing a world-class environment for medical research at the new UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation, planned for completion in 2015.

'One of our greatest strengths is research into the basic biology of cancer.'

Professor Sir David Lane
Chief Scientist,
Cancer Research UK

There will be better treatments with fewer side effects

6

Treatments that accurately target the cancer and have few serious side effects will be available for at least half of all patients

In 2007, we estimated that around a quarter of all patients were eligible for treatments that accurately target their cancer with fewer side effects, such as targeted drugs, high precision radiotherapy and minimally invasive surgery. In just three years, the number of people who could receive such treatments for their cancer has doubled to half of all patients. Although this is good news, by no means every patient gets access to these treatments. Tackling this will be key in future years.

What we've achieved

Since 2007, we have completed several milestones in this area. We have established the new Gray Institute for Radiation Biology and Oncology in Oxford (in collaboration with the Medical Research Council), which will combine the latest advances in science and technology to create new, kinder ways of giving radiotherapy. We have also completed our state-of-the-art facility in Hertfordshire to produce antibodies, gene therapies and cancer vaccines for use in clinical trials.

It is the only one of its kind in Europe outside the pharmaceutical industry. And, in the last three years, through our early clinical trials centres, we have supported over 800 studies across the UK to test pioneering new cancer treatments. These centres (known as Experimental Cancer Medicine Centres) are jointly funded by Cancer Research UK and the different departments with responsibility for health in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Moving to an era of personalised medicine

Going forward, we aim to move to an era of personalised medicine, where patients receive treatment tailored to them. To do this, we are investing further in discovering new targeted drugs in Glasgow and Manchester. We are also investing in new antibody-based treatments (such as Herceptin) and cancer vaccines in Southampton and Oxford. Underpinning all our work will be our research to discover and develop new biomarkers – molecules that doctors can test for or measure in a patient's blood, urine or

cancer sample that can be used to develop new targeted treatments. We are strengthening our radiotherapy and surgery research through our Cancer Research UK Centres so more patients can benefit from the latest approaches to treatment. And, with our partners, we will be launching a major new initiative – our Stratified Medicine scheme. The ultimate aim of this ambitious plan will be to treat every patient with targeted treatments, based on their cancer's genetic make-up.

Since 2007, NICE has approved three new targeted drugs for the first line treatment of cancer:

- **Cetuximab** for bowel and head and neck cancers
- **Sunitinib** for kidney cancer and a stomach cancer called GIST
- **Rituximab** for a type of leukaemia

More people will survive cancer

7

Survival rates for all common cancers will increase, with over two-thirds of newly-diagnosed patients living for at least five years

Cancer survival rates have doubled since the 1970s. In particular, the outlook for people diagnosed with breast, bowel and ovarian cancers and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma has improved significantly. And we are on track to make greater progress by 2020.

Our achievements

The improvements in survival we have seen over the past decades have been largely thanks to better treatments and cancer being diagnosed earlier – at a stage where it can still be successfully treated. We have been at the heart of this progress – for example, our work has helped to revolutionise the treatment of breast cancer.

Challenging next steps

Over the coming years, several of our new Cancer Research UK Centres will be focusing on cancers that are harder to treat – such as lung, oesophageal and pancreatic cancer – and where the outlook for cancer patients is still poor. As in Goal 6, investing in research to improve surgery and radiotherapy is crucial in meeting this goal – together with cancer drugs, these are the cornerstones of cancer treatment. And we are continuing our work to diagnose cancer earlier, treat it more successfully and prevent it from coming back.

'Although the speed of improvement varies and some cancers are still hard to treat, the good news is that survival is improving for almost all types of the disease.'

Professor Peter Johnson
Chief Clinician,
Cancer Research UK

We will especially tackle cancer in low income communities

8

The differences in the risk of dying from cancer between the most affluent and the least affluent will be reduced by half

Cancer particularly affects people in low income communities. People from poorer backgrounds are more likely to smoke and drink heavily and some, including certain ethnic groups, are more likely to ignore signs and symptoms that could be cancer, refuse screening invitations or encounter delays. This goal is one of our most challenging. In the three years since 2007, the risk of dying from cancer has fallen for people in low income communities but the gap between rich and poor has not decreased. We will need to see some dramatic changes in lifestyle behaviours if we are to close this gap. We hope that the smokefree legislation, for which we campaigned, together with maintaining good quality stop smoking services, will encourage more people in low income communities to quit smoking.

What we've achieved

We have run successful projects in London, Newcastle and Derby with groups of people at higher risk of mouth and bowel cancer, where prevention and earlier diagnosis could have a dramatic effect on cancer survival rates. Our Cancer Awareness Roadshow has been visiting some of the most deprived regions in the country to offer advice and support on reducing cancer risk and the importance of early detection. We will continue this work in the coming years. In the past three years, we have also made our health information leaflets free of charge so as many people as possible can benefit from our support. And in 2009 we published a landmark report looking at the links between ethnicity and cancer.

What next?

Going forward, we will continue to carry out world-class research to understand the differences in cancer awareness and health behaviours in different socioeconomic groups. This vital information will identify the areas and communities where we need to focus our efforts.

'Tackling cancer in low income communities is a major challenge for us – but one that will make a significant difference.'

Sara Hiom
Director of Health Information,
Cancer Research UK

People with cancer will get all the information they need

9

At least nine out of ten patients will be able to access the information they need at the time of diagnosis and during treatment

We used the results of national patient experience surveys to set the target for this goal. The next national survey, involving tens of thousands of patients and all cancer types, is due to be completed later this year, so we are not able to fully assess our progress at this stage. Results from recent local surveys show some signs of improvement, suggesting that more patients are getting printed information about their cancer or treatment than in 2007. But this varies between regions and for different cancer types, and there is clearly still a long way to go.

What we've achieved

Our award-winning patient information website, CancerHelp UK, is visited by almost a million people every month. Over the last three years we have increased the quality and quantity of information about cancer on CancerHelp UK. We have made the site

easier to navigate to help people search the wealth of reliable cancer information available, and we have added summaries and results of closed trials to our clinical trials database. We have also introduced a discussion forum – Cancer Chat. Since its launch in 2008, over 5,000 people have joined the site to support each other by sharing their own experiences. Demand to our freephone helpline, where people can talk to a cancer nurse, is still high with nurses responding to around 10,000 enquiries per year. And we have been working closely with the NHS and Macmillan Cancer Support to ensure patients get accurate information from their cancer specialists that is tailored to their needs and the stage of their care. These so-called 'information prescriptions' are already being delivered through the NHS Choices website.

Next steps

Going forward, we will develop our resources and our communication channels so that everyone who needs information on any aspect of cancer will get it. We will continue to work closely with the NHS and other organisations on delivering information prescriptions.

'Your site is proving invaluable to me. The simple layout and information has been, and will continue to be, the heart of my coping with cancer.'

Cancer Chat member

We will continue to fight cancer beyond 2020

10

Sufficient scientists, doctors, nurses and infrastructure will be in place to ensure continued progress in the fight against cancer beyond 2020

We remain committed to fighting cancer beyond 2020. By providing the right environment and the right people for research, and by focusing on high quality science, we are optimistic that we will accomplish this goal.

What we've achieved

Since 2007, we have launched a network of 13 Cancer Research UK Centres, and we will establish more in the coming years. The Centres are a 'virtual' partnership between universities, NHS Trusts, cancer networks and other charities in local areas. Our aim is to create long-term, sustainable centres of excellence in cancer research in the UK to deliver world-class research and improved patient care. And training the clinical and research workforce of the future is a key part of this.

Looking forward

Over the coming years, we will invest in the next generation of talented researchers through our training programmes at our Cancer Research UK Centres. We will continue to work with the government to make sure that charity-funded research in universities is maintained. And we will work with government and others to make sure that the NHS is an attractive place to carry out clinical research. This will help ensure that patients can experience the benefits of our work as soon as possible and will help save more lives from cancer.

'It's vitally important that we invest in talented young scientists – today's PhD students are tomorrow's cancer experts.'

Dr Simon Vincent
Head of Personal Awards & Training,
Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK is the world's leading charity dedicated to saving lives through research. Our groundbreaking work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has seen survival rates double in the last 40 years. But more than one in three of us will still get cancer at some point in our lives. Our research, entirely funded by the public, is critical to ensuring more people beat it.

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We are committed to a series of social and environmental goals. You can find out more about these at:

aboutus.cancerresearchuk.org/sustainability

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