

Oral Cancer in Leicester City

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- 20th November 2024

Mouth Cancer Action Month is a charity campaign run in November each year, by the Oral Health Foundation, which aims to raise awareness of mouth cancer and make a difference by saving thousands of lives through early detection and prevention.



The latest incidence rate for oral cancer cases in Leicester is 22.7 rate per 100,000 population. The Leicester rate is significantly higher than the national rate of 15.4 and is amongst the highest in the country. The mortality rate for oral cancer in Leicester is 9.2 per 100,000 population which is significantly higher than the England rate of 4.7 for the latest year. This is currently the highest rate reported amongst Local Authorities in England.

- 1. Mouth cancer risk factors, signs and symptoms
- 2. Population mouth cancer and mouth cancer risk factors in Leicester City
- 3. Opportunity to reduce incidence and mortality

1. Mouth cancer risk factors, signs and symptoms



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Oral cancers are rising in the UK

Time to step up prevention, including more equitable access to dental care

Richard G Watt, ¹ Anja Heilmann, ¹ David I Conway²

Oral cancers are in the news in the UK. The mouth cancer action month in November and campaigning by an independent advocacy charity, the Oral Health Foundation, along with a personal account by high profile comedian Rhod Gilbert, have highlighted the increasing burden of this devastating and insidious disease. Patients often require substantial surgical and oncological treatment, affecting quality of life, and prognosis is uncertain.

Oral cancers include tumours of the oral cavity (mouth) and oropharynx (throat). For both types combined, over 475 000 new cases and 225 000 deaths were recorded globally in 2020.³ Oral cancer cases have risen over recent decades: between 2001 and 2019 in England, the age standardised incidence (per 100 000) for cancers of the lip, oral cavity, and pharynx rose from 6.6 to 10 for women and from 13.9 to 22 for men.⁴ Much of this increase is driven by oropharyngeal cancers.⁵

smokeless tobacco, a recognised risk factor for oral cancers.⁸

At the 75th World Health Assembly in May 2022, the World Health Organization highlighted the global public health importance of alcohol and agreed that a range of policy measures were urgently needed to combat alcohol harms. Despite supporting the WHO mandate on alcohol, the UK government has failed to take the necessary policy action. Measures on the pricing, availability, and marketing of alcohol are known to be effective in reducing alcohol harm but require strategic policy support from government.

The UK's HPV school vaccination programme, launched in 2008, substantially lowered rates of infection and cervical cancer among younger women¹⁸ and will potentially provide protection against oropharyngeal cancer in the future; the extension of the vaccination programme to include

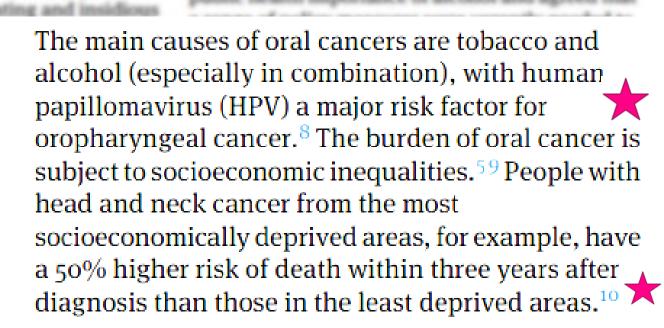
Oral cancers are rising in the UK

Richard G Watt, 1 Ania Heilmann, 1 David I Conwa

aryngeal cancers.

up prevention, including more equitable access to dental care

Mortality has also gone up. Cancer Research UK figures for head and neck cancers (including oral cavity, pharynx, and larynx) show that age standardised mortality has increased by 15% over the past decade and is projected to rise further. In England, death rates for cancers of the lip, oral cavity, and pharynx increased by about 25% for men and about 5% for women between 2013 and 2021. Around 50% of people with head and neck cancer survive for at least five years, with limited improvement observed in recent decades.



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ld Health Organization highlighted the g

forld Health Assembly in May 2022.

Mouth (oral cavity) cancer appears in areas including the lips, tongue or cheeks.



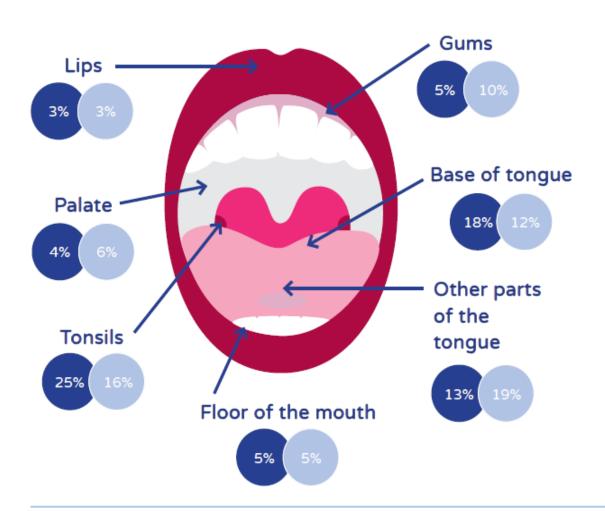
In the United Kingdom (and around the world), the number of people with mouth cancer has been growing considerably.

"Mouth cancer is a disease that does not discriminate. It can truly affect any one of us."

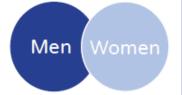
Dr Nigel Carter OBE Chief Executive, Oral Health Foundation

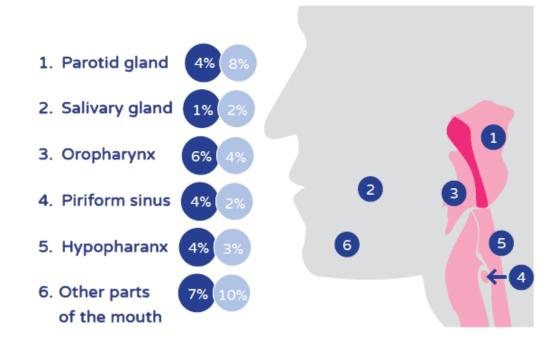


Anatomy of mouth cancer

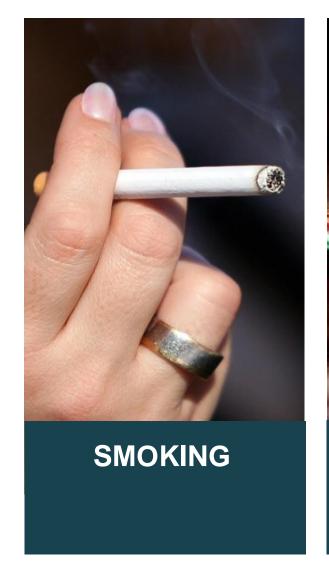


These illustrations show the percentage share of mouth cancer incidences for men and women.





Modifiable risk factors









Symptoms of mouth cancer 1/2





A tooth or teeth that become loose for no obvious reason or swelling of the jaw causing dentures to fit poorly

Unexplained,
persistent
swelling, lumps
or bumps in the
mouth, lips or
neck that don't go
away





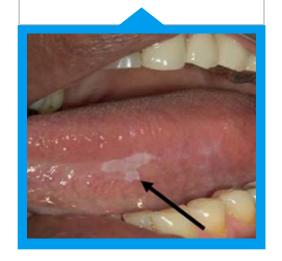
Sore mouth ulcers that don't heal within several weeks

Symptoms of mouth cancer 2/2





Unexplained, persistent numbness or an odd feeling on the lip or tongue White or red patches on the lining of the mouth or tongue





Changes in speech, such as a lisp

2. Mouth cancer in Leicester City

Demographics of a "super-diverse" city

Minority ethnic people make up 59% and 51% of respective populations in UK's first 'super-diverse' cities



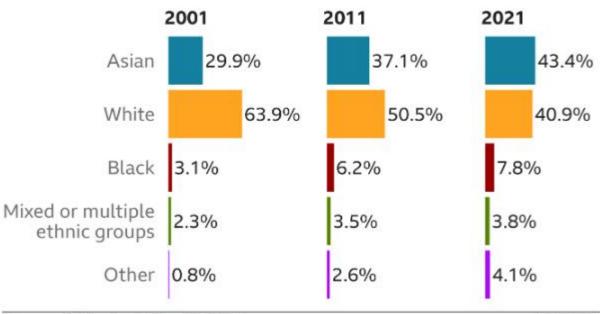
Shoppers at the Bullring market in Birmingham. A Labour councillor said the city's ethnic diversity was a 'veritable strength'. Photograph: Mike Kemp/In Pictures/Getty Images

Leicester and Birmingham have become the first "super-diverse" cities in the UK, where most people are from black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, according to the 2021 census.

A total of 59% of people in Leicester are from minority ethnic backgrounds, while 51% of Birmingham's population are people of colour, as are 54% in Luton, according to the data. Across England and Wales, 18% of people are BAME.

No ethnic group is in the majority in Leicester

Percentage population by broad ethnic group across the last three Censuses



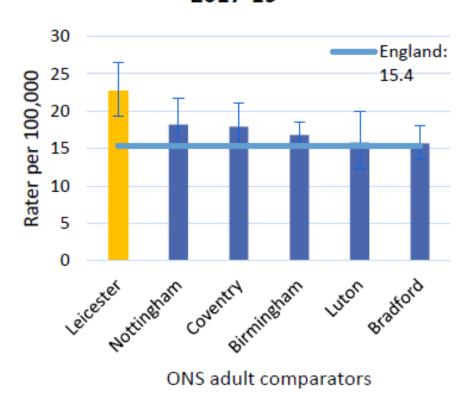
Source: Office for National Statistics

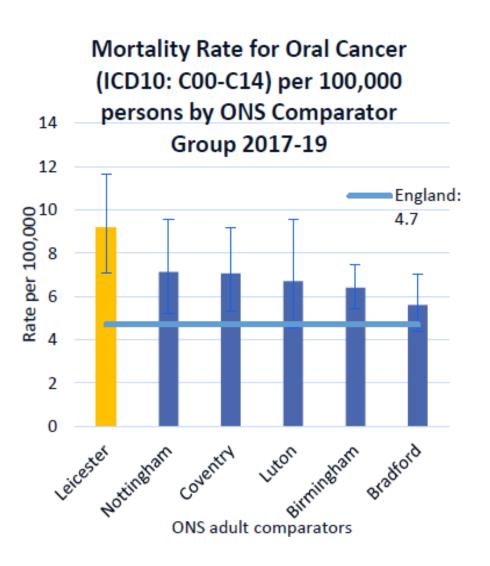




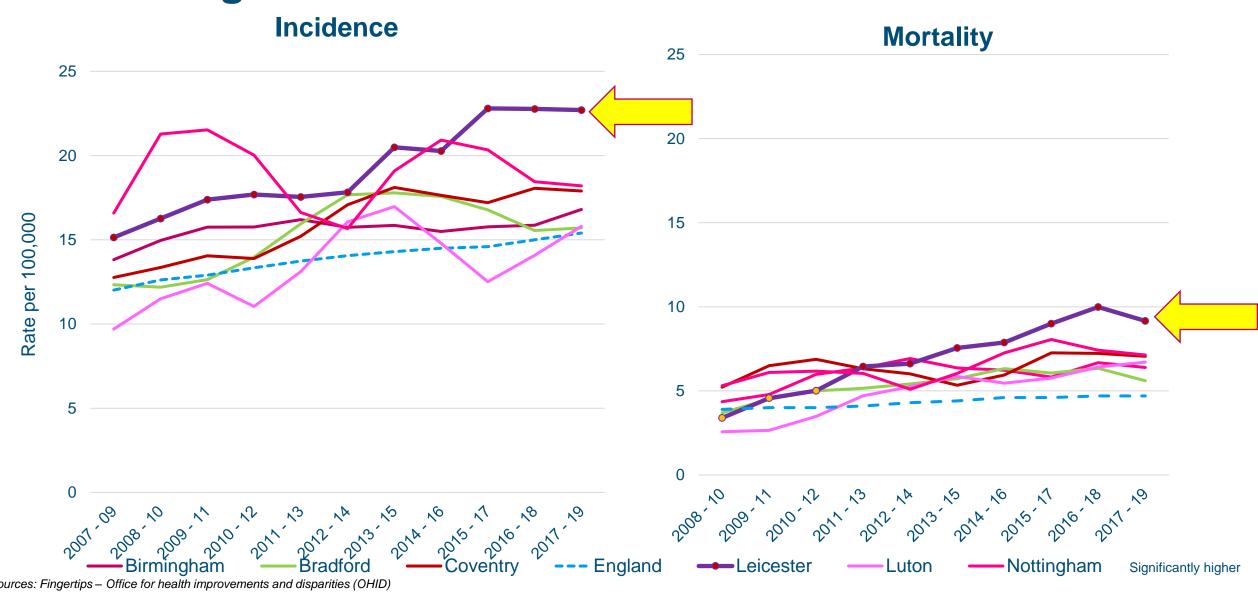
Leicester has unusually higher rates of mouth cancer and deaths caused by mouth cancer

Incidence rate for Oral Cancer (ICD10: C00-C14), per 100,000 persons by ONS comparator group 2017-19





Leicester mouth cancer incidence and mortality has been increasing over time

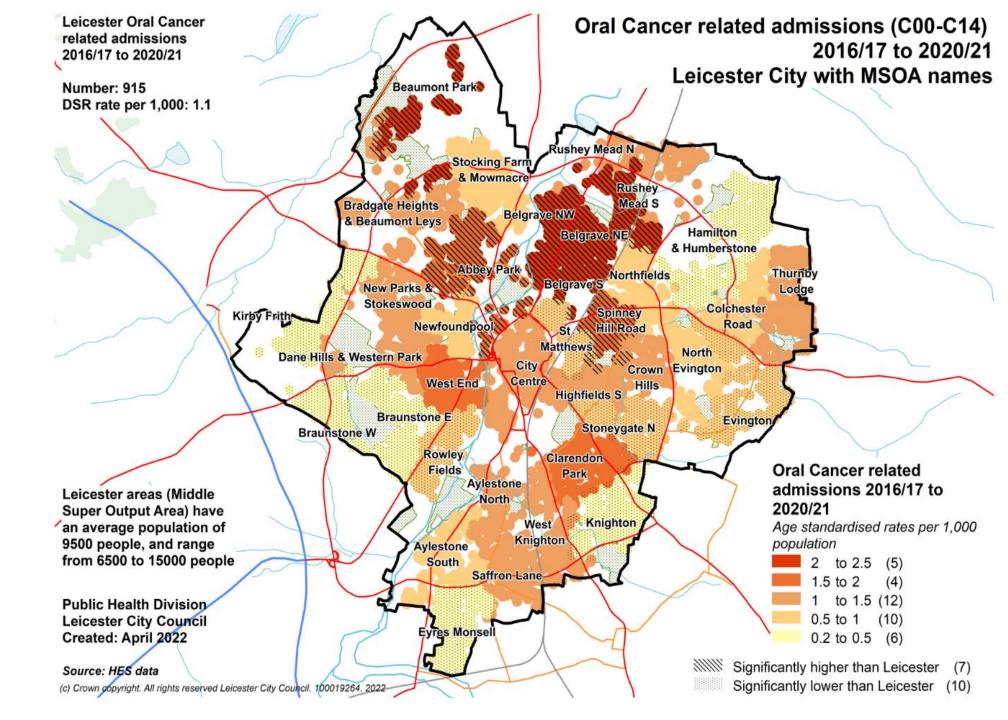


Leicester mouth cancer admissions a)

Areas with high rates include

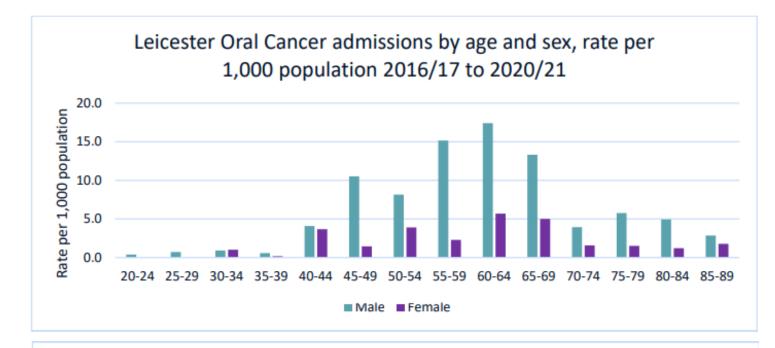
- Belgrave
- Abbey Park,
- Newfoundpool
- Spinney Hill
- Beaumont Park

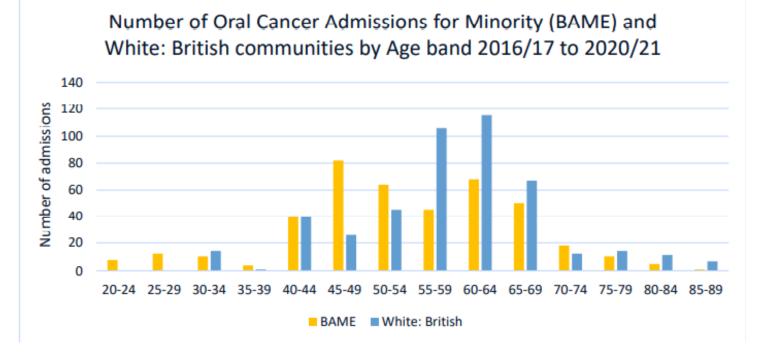
Some of these report low smoking prevalence.



Leicester mouth cancer admissions b)

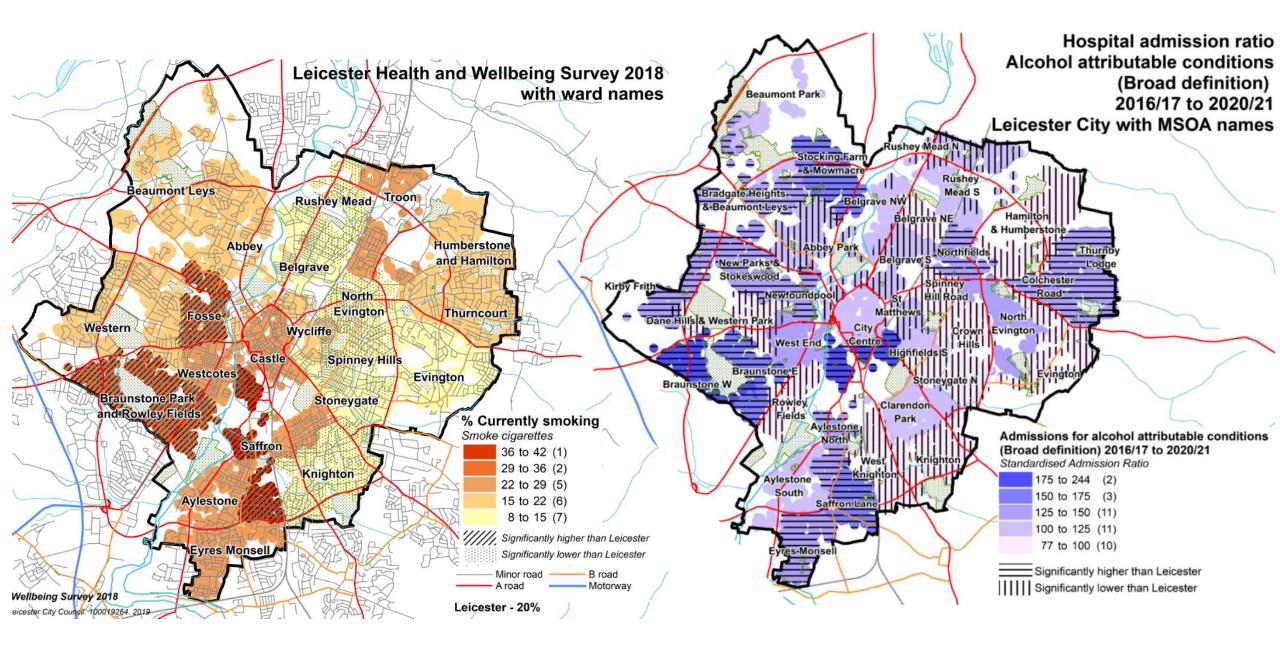
- Particularly high admissions for Leicester males 45-69 years old.
- Admissions are rare for residents younger than 40 years.
- Those from ethnic minority groups are more likely to experience an admission at a younger age.
- Those of White British ethnicity account for most admissions amongst those aged 55+ years

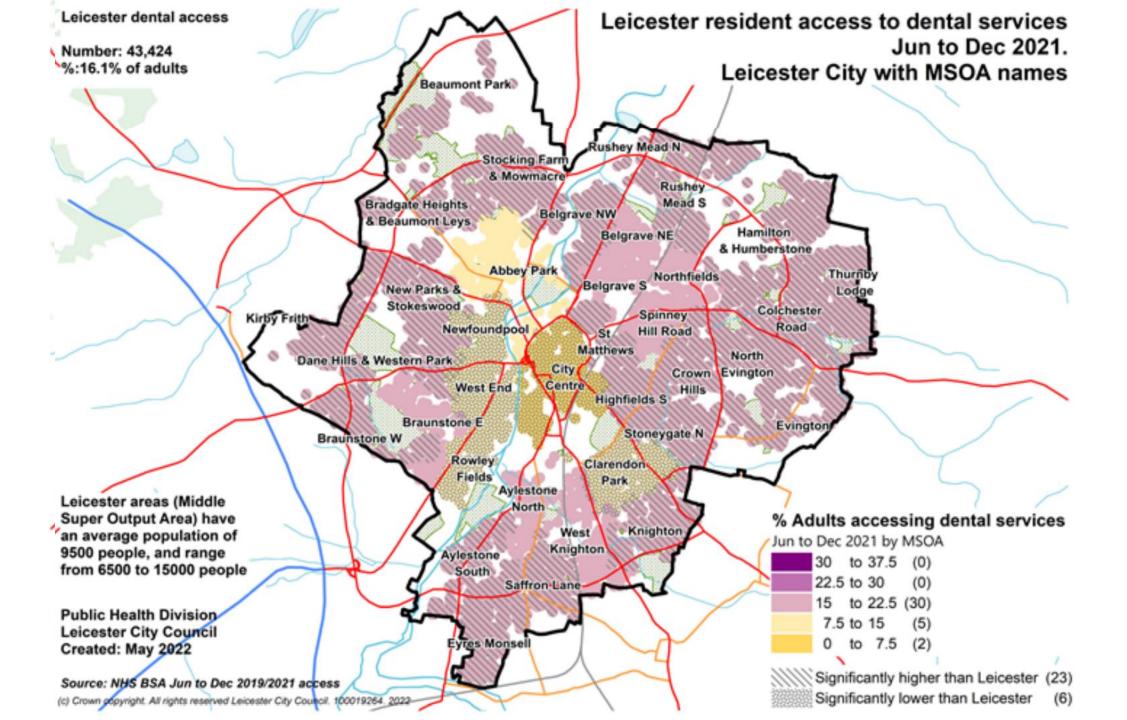




Smoking

Alcohol

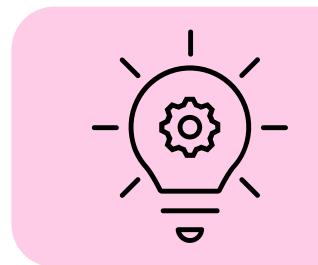


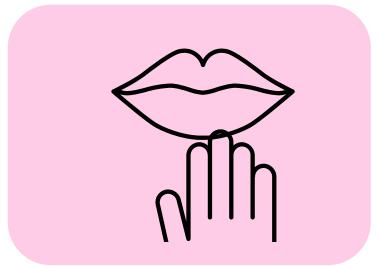


3. Opportunity to reduce incidence and mortality

Strategic priority 1: Improve awareness of signs and symptoms of mouth cancer

- Raise awareness of signs and symptoms amongst patients and the public
- Promote self-checks
- Support health professionals to make mouth cancer diagnoses







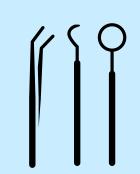
Strategic priority 2: Reduce prevalence of risk factors for mouth cancer

- Reduce prevalence of smoking and communicate mouth cancer risks to people who smoke and ex-smokers
- Reduce prevalence of harmful levels of alcohol consumption
- Raise awareness of the link between smokeless tobacco and oral cancer
- Improve uptake of human papilloma virus vaccination

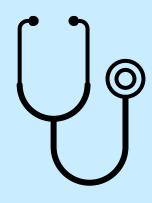


Strategic priority 3: Improve access to medical and dental advice on symptoms

- Encourage attendance of regular dental check-ups
- Communicate the steps required to register with a dentist
- Increase awareness that doctors, as well as dentists, can diagnose mouth cancer
- Create options for dental access for those who are unable to register with a dentist





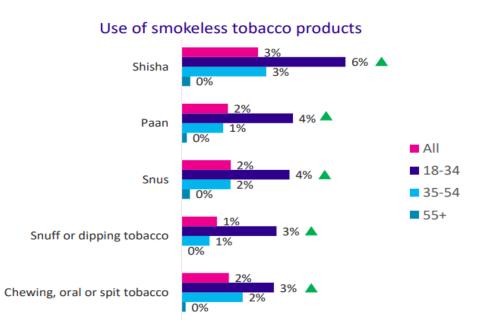


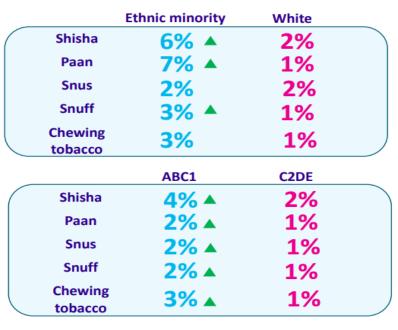


Population Awareness of potential mouth cancer – Risk Factors

Local Cancer Awareness Measure

While the use of smokeless tobacco products is low, younger respondents and those from a higher social grade the most likely group to have ever used them, with Shisha being the most common







Population Awareness of potential mouth cancer – Risk Factors

Local Cancer Awareness Measure 2024

Potential symptoms experienced in last 6 months

Just over half reported experiencing any potential cancer symptom, with around 1 in 4 identifying a potential lung-related cancer symptom and 1 in 5 identifying any potential red-flag cancer symptom

■ Leicester City

I eicestershire + Rutland

Any cancer symptom Any non-specific cancer symptom Any lung-related cancer symptom 24% Any red-flag cancer symptom 21% 23% 20%

oral cancer symptom

Respondents from an ethnic minority background were significantly more likely than respondents from a White background to report they have experienced any potential cancer symptom (59% vs 49%), with 48% of respondents from an Asian background who reported this.

Women were also more likely than men to say they have experienced any potential cancer symptom (63% vs 52%) and any non-specific potential cancer symptom (55% vs 44%).

Population Awareness of potential mouth cancer – Risk Factors

State of Mouth Cancer UK Report 2024

Awareness of the major signs and symptoms of mouth cancer, by region

	UK average	East Anglia	London	Midlands	North East	North West	Northern Ireland	Scotland	South East	South West	Wales	Yorkshire
Lumps and swelling in the head, neck or mouth	43%	50%	32%	44%	41%	43%	41%	47%	44%	46%	53%	46%
Non-healing mouth ulcers	42%	44%	29%	42%	38%	42%	48%	48%	41%	49%	52%	50%
Red patches in the mouth	38%	40%	33%	34%	27%	36%	50%	41%	36%	41%	47%	48%
White patches in the mouth	32%	35%	21%	29%	27%	32%	32%	40%	29%	36%	40%	45%
Persistent hoarseness	26%	32%	18%	22%	22%	30%	41%	27%	25%	28%	41%	27%





Check yourself once a month using our simple 2 minute self check guide.

1. FACE-Look for swellings you have not noticed before and inspect your skin. Turn your head from side to side, stretching the skin over the muscles making

side of your neck. Are there any swellings?

3. LIPS - Pull your upper lip upwards and bottom lip downwards. Look inside for any sores or changes in

4. GUMS - Examine your gums feeling around the gum for anything unusual.

5. CHEEKS-Open your mouth and pull your cheek away one side at a time. Look for any red or white patches.

 NECK - Run your fingers under your jaw and feel either
 TONGUE - Gently pull out your tongue and examine one side then the other. Look for swellings, ulcers or changes in colour. Examine the underside of your

EARLY DETECTION IS KEY!

7. FLOOR AND ROOF OF MOUTH - Tilt your head back and open your mouth. Then lift your tongue up and look at the floor of the mouth. Observing changes



If you'd like to

reduce your risk of

mouth cancer by

quitting smoking

or cutting down on alcohol, call

for support on

0116 454 4000.

Live Well Leicester























Symptoms

- · An ulcer or white or red patch anywhere in the mouth that does not heal within three weeks
- · A lump or swelling anywhere in the mouth, jaw or neck that persists for more than three weeks
- · Difficulty swallowing, chewing or moving the jaw
- · Numbness of tongue or other area of the
- · A feeling that something is caught in the throat
- · A chronic sore throat or hoarseness that persists more than six weeks
- · Unexplained loosening of teeth

Risk Factors

- · Smoking or chewing tobacco is the main cause of mouth cancer
- · Drinking alcohol excessively can increase
- · Drinking and smoking together can increase likelihood of mouth cancer by 30
- · Poor diet is linked to a third or all cancer
- · Human Papilloma Virus, transmitted through oral sex, is a large risk factor
- · Exposure to the sun is a cause of skin cancer which can affect the mouth

livewell.leicester.gov.uk LiveWellLeics





Advice Line: 01924 950 950 • Head Office +44 (0) 208 940 5680



Live Well Leicester



We can help to reduce your risk of

MOUTHICANISE

Quit smoking or cut down on alcohol with Live Well Leicester.

Call 0116 454 4000

Email: livewell@leicester.gov.uk

#MouthCancerAwareness



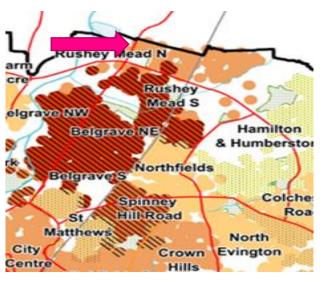


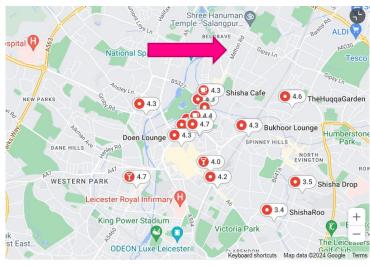
Videos showing how to self-check are available here: https://www.dentalhealth.org/spotthesigns

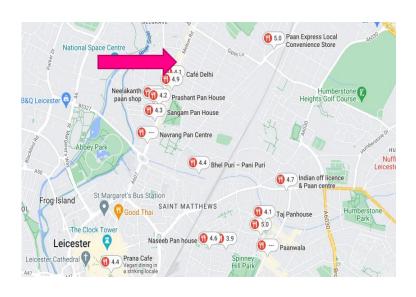


Prevalence of Risk Factors

- Leicester Medical Student project on Shisha
- Shisha Literature review with development of social media assets and structured training for Year 4 using CRUK Oral Cancer Toolkit
- Paan Cafes







Training health professionals to identify potential mouth cancer



GPs/Trainees (GP trainer groups, supported by fellowship GP)



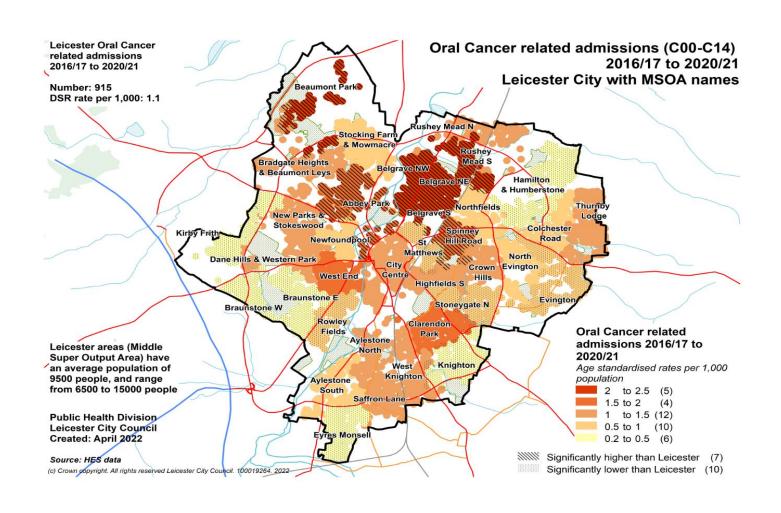
- Community Pharmacists (targeted training)
- Physician associates in Primary Care
- Advanced nurse practitioners in Primary Care

Where UK adults would seek advice when exhibiting symptoms associated with

	Dentist
	A&E
	Pharm
•	Google

Doctor	81%
Dentist	38%
A&E	20%
Pharmacist	14%
Google	11%
Family member	8%
Friend	5%
Social media	3%
Colleague	2%
Nobody	3%

Training health professionals to identify potential mouth cancer – Community Pharmacists



Training health professionals to identify potential mouth cancer – Community Pharmacists

Open access Original research

BMJ Open Qualitative interview study exploring the early identification and referral of patients with suspected head and neck cancer by community pharmacists in England

Andrew Sturrock ¹⁰, ¹ Susan M Bissett ¹⁰, ² Marco Carrozzo ¹⁰, ³ Rachel Lish, ⁴ Debora Howe, ^{5,6} Sue Mountain, ⁷ Michael Nugent ¹⁰, ⁸ James O'Hara ¹⁰, ⁹ Philip M Preshaw ¹⁰, ¹⁰ Adam Todd ¹¹ Scott Wilkes ¹²

To cite: Sturrock A, Bissett SM, Carrozzo M, et al. Qualitative interview study exploring the early identification and referral of patients with suspected head and neck cancer by community pharmacists in England. BMJ Open 2023;13:e068607. doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2022-068607

➤ Prepublication history and additional supplemental material for this paper are available online. To view these files, please visit the journal online (http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmiopen-2022-068607).

Received 23 September 2022 Accepted 13 February 2023

ABSTRACT

Objective To explore pharmacists' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the early identification and referral of patients with signs and symptoms indicating potential diagnosis of head and neck cancer (HNC) in community pharmacy settings.

Design Qualitative methodology, using constant comparative analysis to undertake an iterative series of semistructured interviews. Framework analysis facilitated the identification of salient themes.

Setting Community pharmacies in Northern England.

Participants 17 community pharmacists.

Results Four salient and inter-related categories emerged: (1) Opportunity and access, indicating frequent consultations with patients presenting with potential HNC symptoms and the accessible nature of community pharmacists; (2) Knowledge gap, indicating knowledge of key referral criteria, but limited experience and expertise in undertaking more holistic patient assessments to inform clinical decision

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

- The early detection of cancer is a worldwide health priority. There is limited research into the role of pharmacists in this context; this is the first qualitative study that has explored the role of community pharmacists in the early identification and referral of head and neck cancer.
- Semistructured interviews provided rich qualitative data exploring community pharmacists' experiences in practice.
- An iterative process of concurrent data collection and constant comparative analysis facilitated the simultaneous exploration, refinement and enrichment of key themes.
- All participants were recruited from English community pharmacies, limiting the transferability of findings to different healthcare systems.

Where UK adults would seek advice when exhibiting symptoms associated with mouth cancer

Doctor	81%
Dentist	38%
A&E	20%
Pharmacist	14%
Google	11%
Family member	8%
Friend	5%
Social media	3%
Colleague	2%
Nobody	3%

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Training health professionals to identify potential mouth cancer – Community Pharmacists

- 17 Pharmacies in Red Zones and 10 on edges
- Mixture of Independents/Chains
- Many have Gujarati/Hindi speaking staff
- Alliance, ICB and Dental PH involvement
- Links to Pharmacy First programme with additional training
- Blended training Free FTF, online webinars and video
- Aim to signpost to GP or Dentist
- Professional group by email
- Evaluate numbers examined and outcomes

Information from Cancer Research UK KEY REFERENCES

Oral Cancer Toolkit

Improve your ability to prevent and detect oral cancer



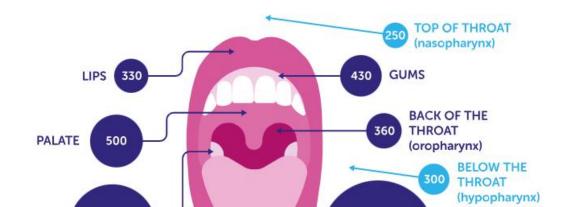
HOME EXAMINATION PREVENTION LESION RECOGNITION REFERRAL CASE STUDIES QUIZ RESOURCES

WHAT IS ORAL CANCER?

Oral cancer refers to mouth cancer, which can start in different parts of the mouth, including the lips, gums or soft sides of the mouth, and oropharyngeal cancer, which starts in the oropharynx and includes tonsil cancer and cancer in the back part of the tongue.

HOW COMMON IS ORAL CANCER?

Average number of **cases reported per year** in the UK (2010-2012) in different parts of the mouth:





How is **Oral Cancer presented** to GPs and Dentists?

Watch a discussion around diagnosis, referral and initiating difficult conversations with your patients.



How to recognise oral



Preventing oral cancer

What are the key risk factors for oral cancer and how can it be prevented?

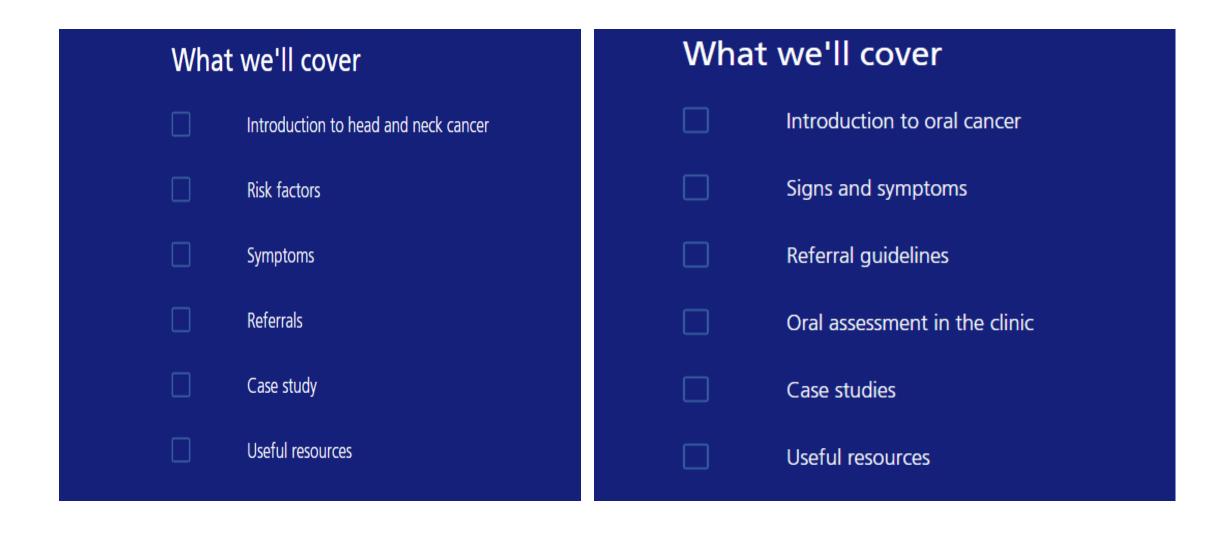


When should you refer a

2 Minute Examination Video

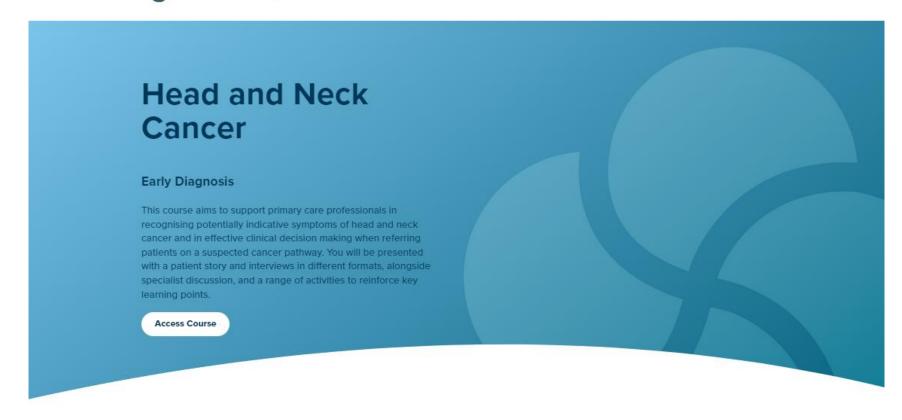


Head and Neck Modules – 10 minute



Head and Neck Module – 60 minutes





HaNC-RC v.2 (2019)

Symptom Based Risk Calculator for Head And Neck Cancer Referrals v2

Please select options from the list based on presence or absence of given symptoms, signs, demographics and social history in your patient as appropriate. All symptoms should be present for 3 weeks or more, apart from stridor which is an acute presentation. Press "Calculate" to obtain the probability value for head and neck cancer. An urgent suspicion of cancer (2 weeks) referral will be recommended if probability is \geq 7.1%, the optimal threshold point for this model. Routine referral is recommended for threholds less than 2.2%. For moderate risk probabilities (2.2%-7.09% an urgent-6 weeks referral is recommended). The abstract of the paper on which this calculator is based can be found here.

Please enter patient Age *	e.g. 21			
Please select Gender *		Male Fe	emale	
Unintentional Weight loss	No Yes		Odynophagia (Pain on swallowing)	No Yes
Smoking status	Never Smoked	~	Oral Ulcer	No Yes
Alcohol status	≤ 14units/week	~	Oral Swelling	No Yes
Hoarse voice	No	~	Unexplained unilateral otalgia (unilateral ear pain with normal ear examination)	No Yes

Benign conditions:



Malignancies



Squamous cell carcinoma



Squamous cell carcinoma



Squamous cell carcinoma



Squamous cell carcinoma of the left lower lip on a background of actinic changes



Any Questions/Feedback



Additional direction?

Re: Oral cancers are rising in the UK

Dear Editor

Suspected oral cancer referrals to head and neck surgeons are generally higher from areas of socioeconomic deprivation where lifestyle risk factors like smoking and alcohol consumption are traditionally more prevalent and where current NHS dental provision is poorest ("dental deserts") (1). Referrals from dentists tend to result in earlier stage disease at diagnosis (2).

Arguably because of the comparative ease of access to clinical assessment through general medical practitioners in primary care, oral cancers in England have been shown to originate from general medical practices more than from general dental practices (2) particularly those based in socioeconomically deprived areas where dental provision is worse. Research (3) suggests that up to 380,000 patients a year see their General Practitioner (GP) with dental problems, rather than a dental professional.

08 February 2024

Paula T Bradley

GP

lennifer Deane, Research Assistant, Newcastle University, UK James O'Hara, Consultant Otolaryngologist Head and Neck Surgeon Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospital Foundation Trust, UK Matt Kennedy, Consultant Oral Maxillo Facial and Head and Neck Surgeon Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospital Foundation Trust, UK Vinicius C. Carrard, Associate Professor (Oral Pathology and Medicine), School of Dentistry, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil / Graduate Program in Epidemiology, TelessaúdeRS-UFRGS, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto

Additional direction?

Re: Oral cancers are rising in the UK Desr Editor Paula T Bradley

A systematic review showed high levels of agreement between teledentistry and clinical consultation when it comes to oral lesions.⁵ Electronic sharing of high resolution smartphone photographs of the oral cavity with specialists has been successfully implemented and outcomes published.⁶

GPs increasingly request patient photographs. Camera phone technology is ubiquitous and required for suspected skin cancer referrals in some English NHS regions.⁷

Reducing mouth cancer risk for refugees and asylum seekers

- Asylum seekers and refugees tend to have poorer oral health and limited access to oral healthcare^{1,2}
- Smoking prevalence, diet and being less likely to brush regularly may also increase oral health risks for these individuals²
- We would therefore like to explore how, for this population we can:
 - Increase awareness of signs and symptoms
 - Support with navigating UK health system
 - Improve health literacy
 - Create an approach that could be replicated to address other health needs
- 1.Keboa MT, Hiles N, Macdonald ME. The oral health of refugees and asylum seekers: a scoping review. Globalization and Health. 2016 Dec;12:1-1.
- 2.Public Health England (unpublished). Leicester asylum seeker and refugee oral health model of care programme evaluation

