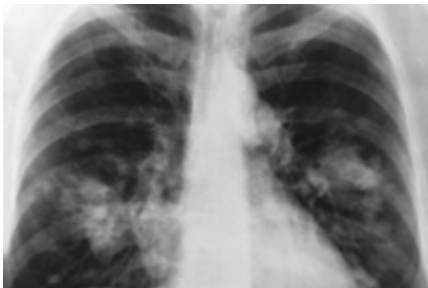


Lung cancer UK price tag eclipses the cost of any other cancer, study finds

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The cost of lung cancer to the UK economy is £2.4 billion each year, far higher than the cost of any other cancer. This highlights the urgent need to continue to reduce the number of young people who become addicted to tobacco – [as smoking causes more than eight in 10 lung cancers in the UK](#). The research is presented at the NCRI Cancer Conference in Liverpool today (Wednesday).

The same Oxford University study found that the total annual cost of all cancers to the [UK economy](#) is £15.8bn. Half (£7.6bn) of the total economic cost of cancer to the UK is due to premature deaths and time off work, followed by healthcare costs (35 per cent, £5.6bn) and unpaid care to cancer patients by friends and family (16 per cent, £2.6bn). [Health care spending](#) represents a cost of £90 per person in the UK population.

Each lung cancer patient costs the UK healthcare system £9,071 annually. This compares with £2,756 for [bowel cancer](#), £1,584 for prostate cancer and £1,076 for [breast cancer survivors](#). The average healthcare spend on each cancer patient in the UK is £2,776.

Research author, Dr Jose Leal, at the Health Economics Research Centre, University of Oxford, said: "Lung cancer costs more than any other cancer – mainly because of potential wage losses due to premature deaths from people in employment - about 60 per cent of the total economic costs – and high [health care costs](#). The death rate from the disease remains high at 56 deaths per 100,000 people in the UK population annually, and almost a quarter of these occur before retirement.

"Our research shows that cancers impact the economy as a whole - and not just the health service. [Premature deaths](#), time off work and unpaid care by friends and family account for 64 per cent of all cancer costs (£10.2bn) in the UK in 2009. These wider costs should be taken into account when deciding research priorities. Cancers with the highest economic cost could offer the highest expected returns from investment in research."

Each year in the UK in the UK 41,500 people are diagnosed with lung cancer and almost 35,000 people die from the disease. Around 157,000 children aged 11-15 start smoking in the UK each year, enough to fill over 5,000 classrooms.

Dr Jane Cope, director of the NCRI, said: "These figures remind us that cancer has a cost, not just in professional healthcare but also in loss of earnings for patients, and for loved ones who give up work to look after them. Since 86 per cent of lung cancer deaths are linked to smoking, we can reduce these financial and societal costs by helping people to stop smoking."

More information: "The economic burden of lung cancer across the European Union," Dr Jose Leal, University of Oxford.

[www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference ... rallel Jose Leal.asp](http://www.ncri.org.uk/ncriconference...allel_Jose_Leal.asp)

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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