

# Call to prioritise cancer care as number living with disease reaches record high

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Thanks to an ageing population and better diagnosis and treatment, 2015 will see an unprecedented number of people living with cancer, [according to Macmillan Cancer Support](#).

The charity says that an estimated 2.5 million people will be living with the condition in the UK in 2015.

The figure, drawn from an analysis published in 2012, is nearly half a

million higher than five years previously.

As a result, charities are calling on the UK's [political parties](#) to make fresh commitments to support those with the disease.

Nick Ormiston-Smith, Cancer Research UK's head of statistical information, highlighted that the number of [cancer](#) cases will increase as the UK population ages. He added that "research has also led to improvements in survival so more people are living longer following a [cancer diagnosis](#)".

"It's essential that the next government increases investment in the NHS, particularly in diagnostics and treatments, so our cancer services are fit to deal with the increasing demand of an [ageing population](#) and can ensure the best possible results for patients", he added.

Lynda Thomas, Macmillan's chief executive, welcomed the news, but stressed that "progress is a double-edged sword".

"As numbers surge, the NHS will soon be unable to cope with the huge increase in demand for health services," she added, warning of a "cancer crisis of unmanageable proportions" if all political parties do not commit to making cancer care a priority.

As the political parties begin their unofficial General Election campaigns, Macmillan is urging them to pledge in their manifestos to boost UK [cancer survival](#) further, and match the best in Europe.

It calls for the "highest levels of dignity and respect" to be paid to all cancer patients and improved end-of-life care.

A Department of Health spokesman said that cancer survival is now at its highest ever level in England.

"The NHS is rising to the challenge this presents and is seeing 51% more patients with suspected cancer than 2010, offering cutting-edge drugs through the cancer drugs fund, focusing on high quality compassionate care as never before, and working to introduce a personalised recovery care package for every patient," he said.

**More information:** "Projections of cancer prevalence in the United Kingdom, 2010–2040." *British Journal of Cancer* (2012) 107, 1195–1202. [DOI: 10.1038/bjc.2012.366](https://doi.org/10.1038/bjc.2012.366) [www.bjcancer.com](http://www.bjcancer.com)

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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