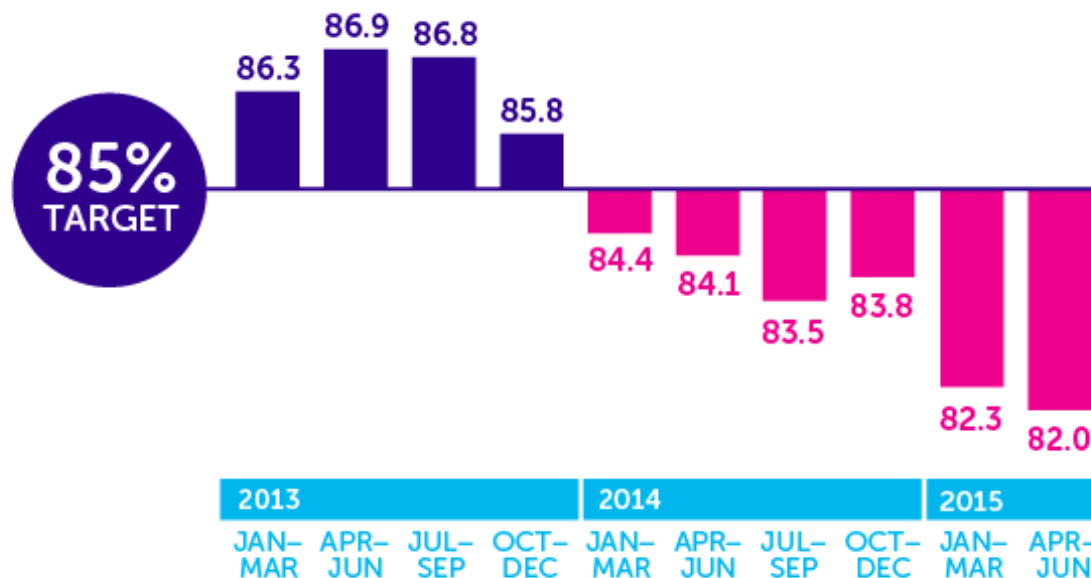


New cancer waiting time figures show thousands still facing delays

August 14 2015

ENGLAND MISSES ITS CANCER REFERRAL TARGET AGAIN

A NEW RECORD LOW % OF NHS CANCER PATIENTS IN ENGLAND STARTED TREATMENT IN 62 DAYS



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Waiting time targets for treating patients referred with suspected cancer have been missed for a sixth successive quarter, according to [new NHS England figures](#).

The NHS in England [aims to treat at least 85 per cent of patients within 62 days of being referred](#) by a GP with suspected [cancer](#).

But only 82.0 per cent were treated on time during the period from April to June.

This was even lower than the previous quarter's figure of 82.3 per cent, showing a continual decline for six successive quarters.

Emma Greenwood, head of policy at Cancer Research UK, said the figures meant that thousands of [patients](#) were being failed.

"Today's figures show a further decline in the 62-day-wait treatment target. Waiting times published in May showed the worst breach since records began in 2009. But today's figures are even worse.

"There have been repeated failures to meet the target for the last 18 months, and half of all NHS trusts in England are now breaching the '62 day target'. England's [cancer survival](#) already lags behind comparable countries and will only get worse if the target continues to be breached. This cannot be allowed to continue.

"These targets exist to ensure swift diagnosis of cancer and access to treatment. Patients want confidence that suspected cancer is taken seriously and is a priority for the NHS. These breaches have become a trend and they are worsening.

The charity called for urgent action to put the recommendations in the new Cancer Strategy into practice.

"We need to support the NHS and ensure it has the resources it needs to meet this challenge," Greenwood said.

The new strategy, published last month, called for increased investment in diagnostic tests and for all patients to have swift access to appropriate treatment.

In the run-up to the last election, the Conservative party manifesto committed to implement the Strategy's recommendations.

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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