

# Report calls for action on cancer services in Wales

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A new hard-hitting report into cancer services in Wales - produced by the University of Glasgow's Institute for Health and Well-being - calls for an ambitious new plan to cope with growing numbers of people being diagnosed with the disease.

The comprehensive report commissioned by Cancer Research UK has concluded that some people in Wales are waiting too long for test results which determine whether they have [cancer](#).

The research was produced by a working group led by Professor David Morrison of the Institute of Health and Wellbeing together with colleagues from the University of Stirling, Bangor University and Queen's University in Belfast.

The 'Where next for cancer services in Wales?' report also found other significant gaps in services.

Cancer Research UK is now calling for the Welsh Government to build on the foundations of its previous cancer plan and set out its priorities for how it is going to target resources to improve patient care and cope with the increasing demand.

By developing a brand new cancer strategy, and underpinning it with investment, the Welsh Government has a key opportunity to deliver better care for patients in Wales, it says.

Sir Harpal Kumar, Cancer Research UK's chief executive, said: "This report paints a worrying picture, from cancer experts, of NHS cancer services in Wales reaching a tipping point. Whilst there have been notable improvements in cancer care, with more people surviving than ever before, we are a long way from where we should be.

"One in two people will develop cancer at some point in their lives. We will be diagnosing more people, treating more people and helping more people recover from cancer in coming years. We're better informed than ever about how best to prevent, diagnose and treat the disease, and how to deliver better patient experience and quality of life.

"We have an opportunity to save thousands of lives from cancer every year. Now is the time for the Welsh Government to use the new cancer strategy to set bold ambitions and priorities, supported by investment and leadership."

In their analysis, researchers reported that cancer treatment waiting times – a barometer for how well cancer services are performing and the pressure they are under – had been missed repeatedly in Wales. This is a critical issue that requires urgent attention.

When scrutinising cancer services in Wales, the research team also found that patients were waiting too long for diagnostic tests after being referred by their GP.

Tom Crosby, clinical director of the Velindre Cancer Centre in Cardiff, said: "This is a very balanced report, which highlights some of the successes in the delivery of high quality cancer care in Wales but also the challenges yet to be addressed.

"Most of all it describes the huge opportunities we have to improve survival by developing a clinically led, nationally agreed strategy.

"We will need to better raise awareness of cancer, diagnose it earlier, ensure timely access to effective treatment and even better support for patients through and beyond that treatment. By taking this opportunity we can transform patient outcomes and experience."

Provided by University of Glasgow

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