

# P-06-1435 Targeted lung cancer screening

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 30 Medi 2024  
Petitions Committee | 30 September 2024

Reference: SR24/8813

**Petition Number:** P-06-1435

**Petition title:** We're calling on the Welsh Government to commit to implementing targeted lung cancer screening

**Text of petition:**

Lung cancer claims 1,800 lives each year, more than any other cancer in Wales.

This must change.

We can do things to reduce this impact. One of these is targeted lung cancer screening, which would invite people aged 55-74 to be screened if they have a high-risk of lung cancer.

This screening can catch lung cancer at an earlier stage: and can save lives from lung cancer.

By taking 2 minutes to sign, you can aid calls for the Welsh Government to commit to implementing this screening in Wales.

In Wales, almost half of lung cancers are caught at the latest stage. Too many die from lung cancer for this reason.

By screening those most at risk we can detect lung cancer earlier: when survival is highest.

We know this works, as an evaluation of English Targeted Lung Health Checks (a pilot programme) saw:

- 76% of lung cancers caught at an early stage.

Last year, the UK National Screening Committee recommended targeted lung cancer screening to all UK nations, with the provision of stop smoking support. This screening is for people aged 55-74 without symptoms, who hold a high risk of lung cancer (those with a history of smoking). Sadly, only one UK nation (England) has committed to a national rollout of this. This must change.

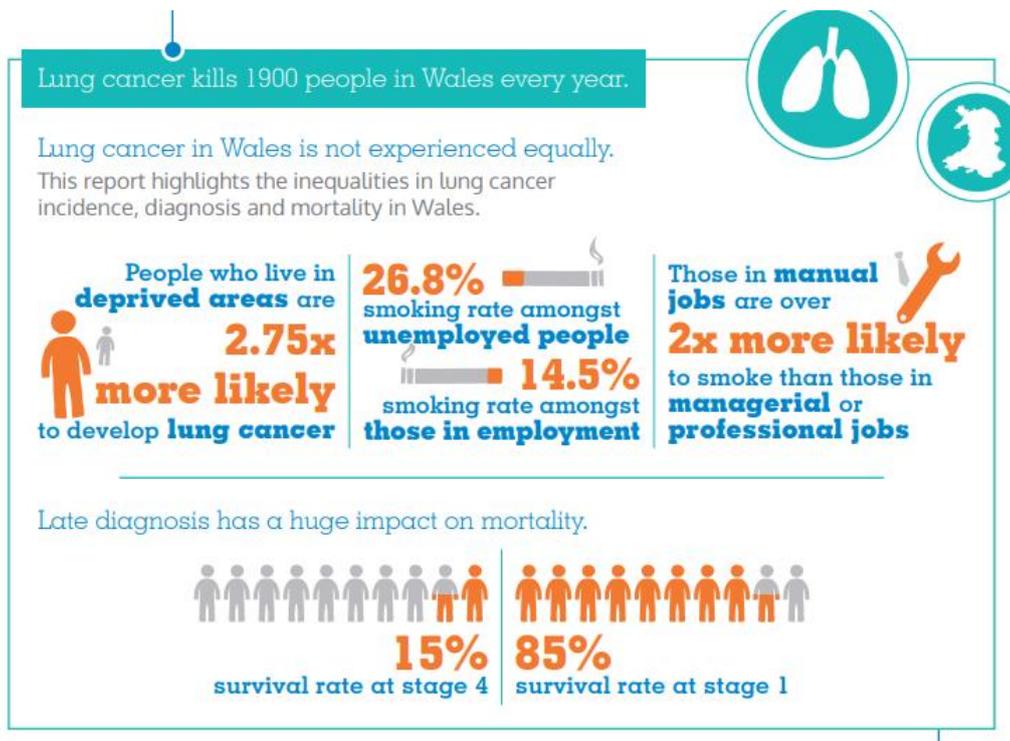


Lung cancer takes a terrible toll on Wales. Targeted lung cancer screening can help reduce this toll, giving more people precious time with family and friends.

## 1. Background

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths worldwide. In 2022, there were 1,810 deaths from lung cancer in Wales. It is often diagnosed at an advanced stage when treatment options are limited. Smoking is the most common cause of lung cancer.

People who live in deprived areas of Wales are more likely to develop lung cancer. A 2022 report by Tenovus Cancer Care highlights the inequalities in lung cancer incidence, diagnosis and mortality in Wales:



Approaches to screening in the UK are based on advice by the UK National Screening Committee (UKNSC) (the Scottish Government also takes advice from the Scottish Screening Committee, and the Northern Ireland Executive from the Northern Ireland Screening Committee).

**UKNSC says that targeted screening for lung cancer is recommended** for people aged 55 to 74 identified as being at high risk of lung cancer. In 2022 it recommended that **the four UK nations should move towards implementation of targeted lung cancer screening** with integrated smoking cessation service provision. It said the Targeted Lung Health Checks (TLHC) programme provides a feasible and effective starting point for implementation in England.

UKNSC recommended that a lung cancer screening task group be set up to help:

- refine the recommendation;
- address implementation challenges;
- determine the optimum protocols and pathway for screening across the UK.

## 2. Welsh Government action

In July 2023, the Minister for Health and Social Services, Eluned Morgan MS, gave an **update on lung screening in Wales**. She said that the Welsh Government has accepted the UKNSC's recommendation for targeted lung screening in principle, and is considering how this should be delivered in Wales.

We are working with Public Health Wales to explore options on the approach for a national programme for Wales and are keen to learn from the findings of the OP [operational pilot] which is due to commence in the CTMUHB [Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board] area this year. Taking this work forward, we want to engage and include voices and views from people in Wales, charities and all relevant multidisciplinary professionals and service areas. We are also working with Scotland and England to identify the optimal pathway, which has not yet been determined.

The Minister also noted that the UKNSC recommended integrating screening with smoking cessation services.

As the targeted lung cancer screening programme develops, we plan to ensure our smoking cessation services are fully integrated with the screening programme so that we can support more smokers in Wales to be smoke-free.

In her response to the Petitions Committee (3 July 2024), the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Eluned Morgan MS, confirmed that a UK task group has been established and that the four UK nations are meeting regularly to share information and learning about how a screening programme can best be implemented. She highlights that none of the UK nations has implemented a lung screening programme as yet, and all are working together to find an optimal delivery model.

The response also provides further information about the work underway in Wales.

Public Health Wales is taking forward scoping work to determine fundamental information about the conditions necessary to implement a programme in Wales, including the resource and workforce requirements and potential impact on health board services. This work will be necessary before a timetable for implementation can be established. The first phase of the scoping work has started and is due to be completed by autumn 2025. The evaluation of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board lung screening pilot should also have concluded at this point and will provide valuable learning.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.