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## **12-POINT PLAN WILL DOUBLE LUNG CANCER SURVIVAL INSIST EXPERTS**

The UK's leading lung cancer experts have today (5<sup>th</sup> November) outlined a 12-point plan to help double lung cancer survival and eradicate the huge national inequalities that exist in lung cancer care.

The development of screening, greater funding of research, earlier diagnosis and ensuring all patients, wherever they live, have access to a full range of lung cancer specialists and professionals, are among some of the detailed calls to action announced in the first-ever UK Lung Cancer Plan.<sup>1</sup>

"UK lung cancer survival is one of the worst in Europe with half of all lung cancer patients dying within six months," says Dame Gill Oliver, chair of the United Kingdom Lung Cancer Coalition (UKLCC).

A recent analysis showed that UK survival rates lag seriously below the European average, despite the high national expenditure on health services. Only Malta (with a five-year survival rate of 4.6%) has a lower survival rate than Scotland (8.2%) and England (8.4%). In comparison, 16.8% of lung cancer patients in Iceland are still alive five years after diagnosis.<sup>2</sup>

"Not only are the differentials across Europe alarming but currently, despite service improvements, you are four times more likely to survive lung cancer in some parts of England than others\*," adds Dame Gill. "This is unacceptable."

The UKLCC'S vision is to double lung cancer survival during the next eight to ten years, with the co-operation of health professionals, local primary care organizations and government. The new 12-point plan highlights the areas where the biggest gains can be made and is the result of months of discussion between the UKLCC's experts, including doctors, nurses, researchers and patient groups.

"We know if we apply the best standards of care already being demonstrated in some parts of the country, we can double one year and five year lung cancer survival rates by 2010 and 2015," says Dr Mick Peake, chair of the UKLCC's clinical sub-group and NHS national clinical lead for lung cancer. "Thousands of lives could be saved as a result."

Lung cancer is the UK's biggest cancer killer<sup>3</sup>; it kills over 33,000 people each year,<sup>3</sup> which is more than breast cancer, prostate cancer, bladder cancer and leukaemia combined.<sup>4</sup> The disease accounts for one in 20 of all deaths in the UK,<sup>5</sup> one in six of all cancer cases and one in four of all cancer deaths.<sup>6</sup> It is reported that four people die from lung cancer in the UK every hour.<sup>3</sup> Despite, being labeled a 'smoker's disease', thousands of people with lung cancer have never smoked.

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Note to editors:

\*The NHS Performance Indicators (2002) for lung cancer survival shows wide variations in lung cancer survival in England. Currently, as a result of socioeconomics and health provision inequalities, you are four times more likely to survive from lung cancer in Chelsea, Stockport and Solihull than you are in Northumberland, Rotherham or Sunderland (for example).<sup>7</sup>

The UK Lung Cancer Coalition (UKLCC) is a powerful new coalition of the UK's leading lung cancer experts, senior NHS and Department of Health professionals, charities and healthcare companies. It is the UK's only multi-interest group in lung cancer and it is the first time that all the major charities with an interest in the disease have joined forces to fight lung cancer. The UKLCC is supported by gifts in kind from charities and software manufacturers and by direct grants from AstraZeneca, GE Healthcare, Lilly UK, Pierre Fabre, Roche Products Ltd, Sanofi-aventis who are bound by a funding and governance policy. [www.uklcc.org.uk](http://www.uklcc.org.uk)

#### References:

1. *Lung Cancer Plan: improving lung cancer survival in the UK*. UK Lung Cancer Coalition; November 2007
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3. Figures from Cancer Research UK, available at: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats/types/lung/mortality/>
4. Figures from Cancer Research UK, available at: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats/mortality/cancerdeaths/?a=5441>
5. [http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/college/ceeu/ceeu\\_lung\\_home.htm](http://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/college/ceeu/ceeu_lung_home.htm)
6. Cancer Atlas of UK and Ireland, 2005. Chapter 13, p139
7. [http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/nhsperformanceindicators/2002/hacals\\_d.html](http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/nhsperformanceindicators/2002/hacals_d.html)

For further information, please contact:-

Lynsey Conway on 07778 304233  
email@lynseyconway.co.uk