

One Cancer Voice letter to The Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP,
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care



The Rt Hon Dr Thérèse Coffey MP
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU



21 September 2022

Dear Secretary of State

We are writing as a coalition of more than 50 cancer charities, speaking with One Cancer Voice, to congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and to offer our support in your work on cancer.

As you will be aware, we are currently in an acute cancer crisis with missed cancer waiting times, a growing cancer backlog and a worsening cancer patient experience. It has never been more important to have strong political leadership on cancer than it is now.

On behalf of people affected by cancer we were relieved to hear the Prime Minister commit at PMQs to publishing the 10-Year Cancer Plan. We now ask that you reaffirm this commitment by setting out a clear date for publication and your commitment to an ambitious and fully funded plan that delivers for the 1 in 2 people who will get cancer in their lifetime.

The 2019 Conservative Party manifesto committed to improve cancer survival but we are concerned that this commitment will not be met by the time of the next General Election, in fact we risk seeing the progress we've made reverse. Indeed, we still lag behind other comparable countries in terms of cancer survival, largely because of late diagnosis. Today, there are around 375,000 new cancer cases in the UK every year – but by 2035, we expect that UK number to rise to 500,000. It is critical that measures are taken now both to address this growing cancer challenge and to take a long-term view of cancer, how we can improve and reform the health system to transform outcomes for patients today and for tomorrow.

We understand that you will need to consider the draft 10-Year Cancer Plan developed by your officials as part of the 'war on cancer' and the ambition to deliver world class cancer outcomes in this country. If you are in need of further evidence to support the plan then we are, individually and collectively, very happy to provide it.

We attach a copy of our full 10-Year Cancer Plan submission and urge you to publish this plan and ensure it delivers against three points below:

- **Fit for the future, fit for patients:** This plan must set bold and stretching targets to achieve what really matters to people affected by cancer in the next decade – for example, by ensuring 78% of people are diagnosed at stage 1 or 2 and a 95% Faster Diagnosis Standard is met and ensuring everyone with cancer is able to access a needs assessment and personalised care plan.
- **Visionary and achievable:** A transformative plan will harness the power of the UK's world beating research and innovation to improve outcomes, patient experience and tackle health

inequalities head on. It would publicly announce objectives, set timelines and match them with smart investment, helping to boost the economy.

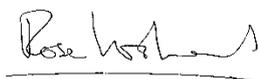
- **A roadmap to solve cancer staff shortages:** The plan must set out targeted funding to grow the cancer workforce to meet current and future demand to tackle backlogs, make more time for patients and drive innovation. It needs robust workforce modelling for the lifetime of the plan, matched by investment for at least the lifetime of the current Spending Review.

We would welcome the opportunity to support your work. Between us we have insight, evidence and experience across the awareness, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and recovery from all cancer types and patient groups, including adults, children and young people. Following your positive words, reinforcing patients as your priority, we would like to invite you to join us at a meeting to discuss how we think cancer services can be improved in this country and would be very happy to convene a round table with people affected by cancer so you can hear first-hand of their experiences and ideas.

Yours sincerely



Jeannie Rigby
Chief Executive
Action Bladder Cancer UK



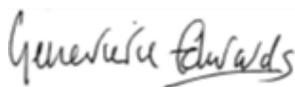
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Genevieve Edwards
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Bowel Cancer UK



Will Jones
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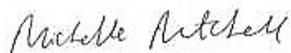
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Michelle Mitchell OBE
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Kathryn Scott
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