

4 February 2024

World Cancer Day - Close the Care Gap

Today is World Cancer Day, and this year's theme is Close the Care Gap, calling on governments around the world to promote health equity, reduce disparities in incidence and mortality and finally close the care gap.

Despite huge improvements in technology, massive inequalities still exist in cancer detection and treatment. Nearly one in ten (9.1%) of cancer cases are associated with deprivation, with the government having reduced funding for public health programmes by around £800m since 2015. This has led to programmes which promote better health and reduce the risk of cancer being scaled back or scrapped. According to [Cancer Research UK](#), this resulted in an additional 33,000 avoidable cases of cancer each year.

People from deprived areas are more likely to get cancer, to have it detected later and to ultimately die from the disease. [A study from The Lancet](#), published in December, found that people who live in the poorest parts of England have more than a 70% higher risk of dying from cancer compared to people from more affluent areas.

Know your rights

If you're working and living with cancer it's important to know your rights. Cancer is recognised as a disability and you should receive protections from less favourable treatment, discrimination and be entitled to reasonable adjustments to help you continue in work.

Read our guide on [reasonable adjustments](#), and for PCS Reps, there's a specific guide for [assisting members with cancer](#).

Take action - support the call

The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) is calling on people to highlight the continuing gap in cancer care with politicians and decision makers. The UICC is promoting World Cancer Day as an opportunity to ask governments to improve health equity, to make it easier for all populations to enjoy affordable and accessible cancer services, and to reduce disparities in cancer incidence and mortality. Join the call to action now on [the UICC website](#).