

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP

Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing St
London
SW1A 2AA



Dear Prime Minister,

England is facing a cancer emergency with missed cancer waiting times, a growing cancer backlog and worsening cancer patient experience. We are lagging behind comparative countries on cancer survival.

A year ago on World Cancer Day, 4 February 2022, the government declared a 'war on cancer' and committed to tackling this challenge through the publication of a 10 Year Cancer Plan for England.

As a group of people affected by cancer and cancer charities across the country, we welcomed this - action on cancer is desperately needed. Over 5,000 people – including many cancer patients and people who have lost loved ones to cancer – shared their experiences, needs and suggestions for what this plan should do.

In the year since, around 375,000 people in the UK will have been diagnosed with cancer and sadly around 167,000 will have lost their lives to the disease.

Now, your government has announced it will not be publishing the 10 Year Cancer Plan. Instead, it will publish an interim 5 year Major Conditions Strategy later this year, of which cancer will be only one part. We are devastated to have gone from anticipating a detailed 10 year strategy, dedicated wholly to transforming us into a 'world-leading' force in cancer care, to one part in a strategy spanning a huge range of conditions.

Political leadership on cancer has never been more important than now, especially if your government is to deliver on the 2019 Conservative manifesto commitment to increase cancer survival rates in this country. This is a common goal we all share, yet people affected by cancer across the country continue to wait far too long for vital diagnostic tests and treatment.

That is why we urge you, as Prime Minister, to commit to taking action to dramatically improve the experience and outcomes for people affected by cancer and to deliver the world-class cancer services they were promised. We ask that you ensure that the cancer content within the Major Conditions Strategy is ambitious, fully funded and incorporates the evidence already provided by the cancer community. We also ask that the government commit to ensuring there is a longer-term strategy for cancer which focusses on transforming cancer research, diagnosis, treatment and patient experience.

1 in 2 people will get cancer in their lifetime and it will likely affect every family across the UK. People affected by cancer feel frustrated and let down. This is your opportunity to commit to taking action for everyone affected by cancer today, tomorrow and in the future. Please do not waste it.

Yours sincerely,