

# Cancer Screening Programmes in Tower Hamlets

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# Cancer screening programmes (1)

- Must be registered with a GP to access cancer screening.
- Three cancer screening programmes:
  - Breast
  - Bowel
  - Cervical

## Breast Screening

- Eligibility
  - Women aged 50 to 71 (over 71s can request screening).
  - Trans or non-binary people who have not had top surgery.
  - Trans people who have been taking feminising hormones for 2 years.
- Recall is every 3 years
  - Patients are recalled by the date the next test is due (no longer just by practice).
  - Appointment letters are sent from centralised breast screening hub.
    - Clients are given a timed appointment.
    - Bookings are usually made 6 – 8 weeks in advance.
- Service provider for Tower Hamlets – Central and East London Breast Screening Service (hosted by the Royal Free Hospital).
  - Screening centre for Tower Hamlets patients is Mile End Hospital.

# Cancer screening programmes(2)

## Bowel Screening

- Men and women aged 54 – 74.
- From 2025 screening ages will be 50 – 74 (over 74s can request a kit).
- Sample is taken at home and sent to the lab for testing.
- Recall is every 2 years.
  - FIT kits are sent automatically from the regional bowel screening hub – based at St Marks Hospital in North West London.
- Screening service for Tower Hamlets is provided by Homerton University Hospital.
  - Clients with a positive test will be followed-up here and offered a colonoscopy.

## Cervical Screening

- Who can be screened:
  - Women and people with a cervix (trans and non-binary people) aged between 25 and 64.
- Frequency of recall:
  - Aged 25 – 49 – every 3 years.
  - Aged 50 -64 every 5 years.
- Service delivered in GP practices, usually by a practice nurse.
- HPV primary testing – screened for Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and only look for cell changes if HPV is detected.
- If abnormal cells are found –follow-up with a coloposcopy at nearest hospital (Royal London).

# Cancer screening responsibilities

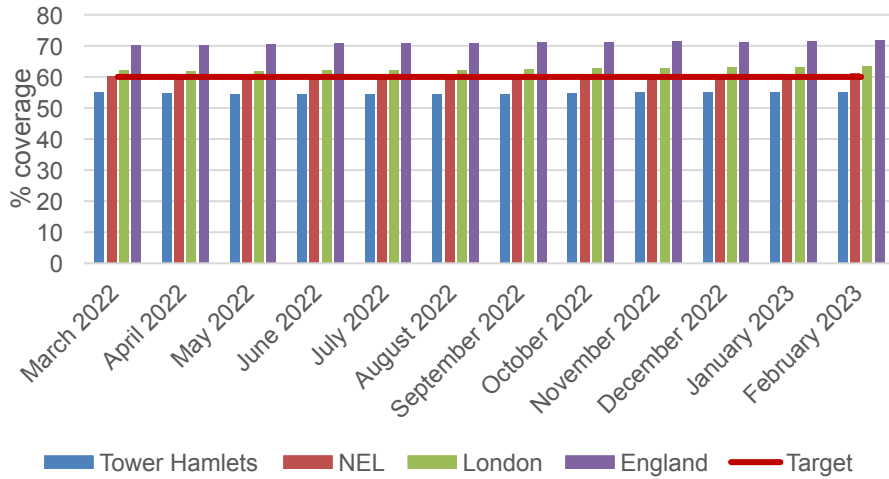
- Cancer screening services are commissioned by NHS England.
- NHSE hold contracts with screening providers – local oversight from regional NHSE Screening and Immunisations team.
- Breast and bowel screening services – provide the services.
  - Health promotion specialists in the screening services– increase awareness of screening.
- GPs provide cervical screening services within their contracts.
- PCN Directed Enhanced Service (DES) also requires PCNs to improve one type of cancer screening in a hard to reach group.
- Voluntary and community organisations have historically raised awareness of cancer screening through outreach work – usually commissioned by CCGs.
- The role of the NEL Cancer Alliance:
  - To increase participation in cancer screening to support the aim to diagnose 75% of cancers by stage 1 or 2 by 2028.
  - Bring together stakeholders across the ICS to improve screening rates in order to increase earlier diagnosis.
  - Reduce inequalities of access to screening services.
- Fund improvement projects, but do not provide on-going funding for business as usual.

# Cancer screening coverage

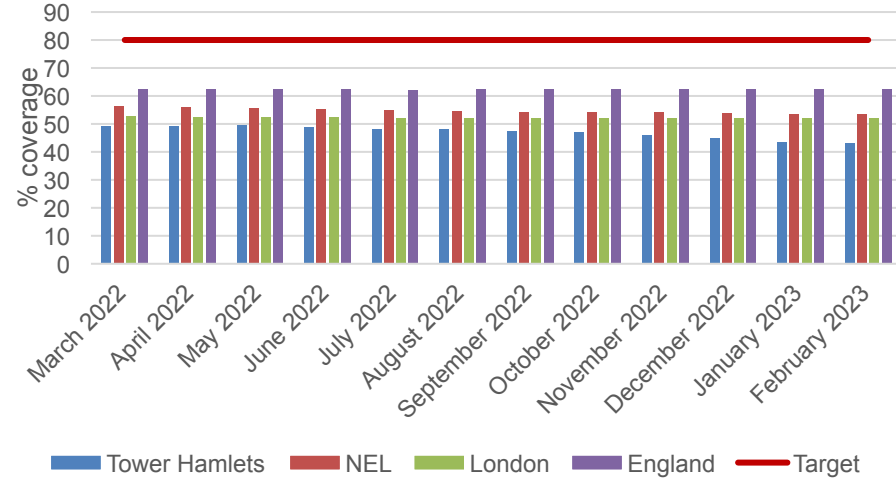


North East London  
Cancer Alliance

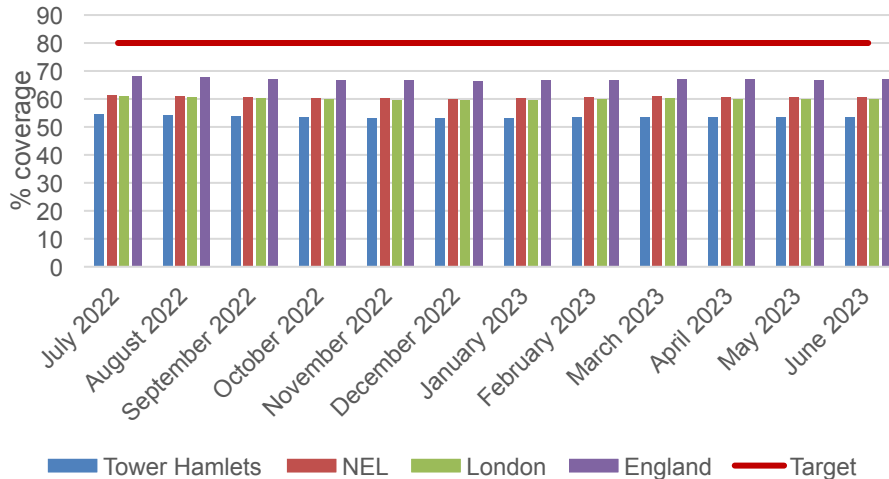
### Bowel Screening



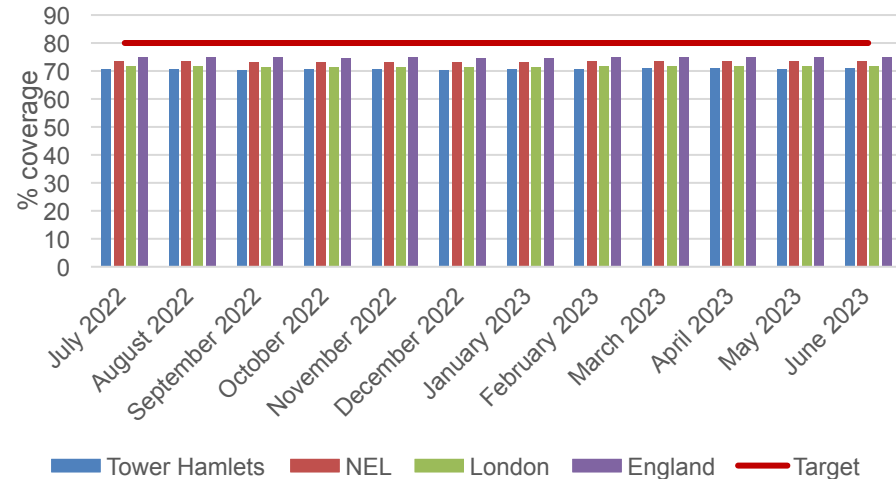
### Breast Screening



### Cervical Screening - 25 - 49 year olds



### Cervical Screening - 50 - 64 year olds



# Targeted Lung Health Checks

- Nationally led programme – NEL on-boarded in phase 3.
- Currently provided by InHealth.
- Will transition to a screening programme over the next three years.
- Eligibility: men and women aged 55 – 74 who have ever smoked will be invited.
- Triaged according to risk and may be invited for a face-to-face health check with a nurse.
- High risk – invited for a low dose CT scan (LDCT).
- Started inviting patients from Tower Hamlets in July 2023.
- By end of August
  - 527 patients from Tower Hamlets had LDCT.

# Inequalities in screening

- Currently unable to access screening data by ethnicity or deprivation.
- Triangulate data to understand which communities are not attending screening.

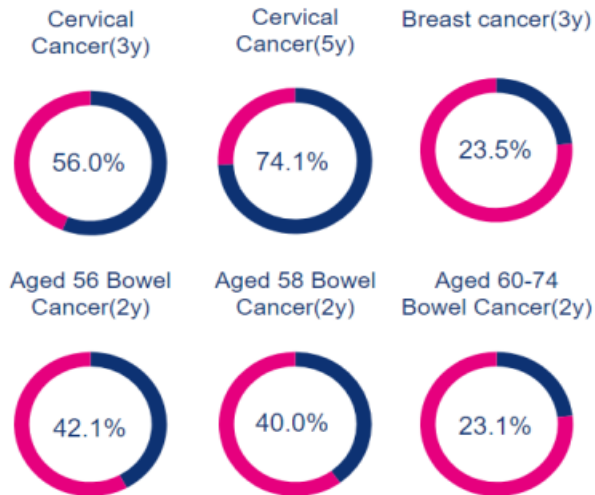
## Snapshot of inequalities data for Tower Hamlets at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

People with a learning disability

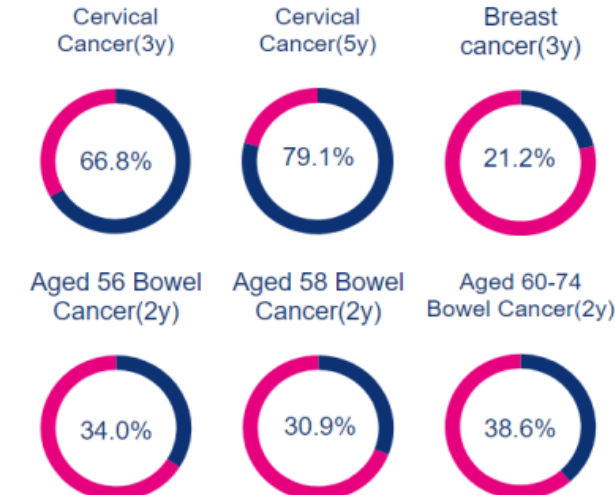
People with an SMI

Homeless people

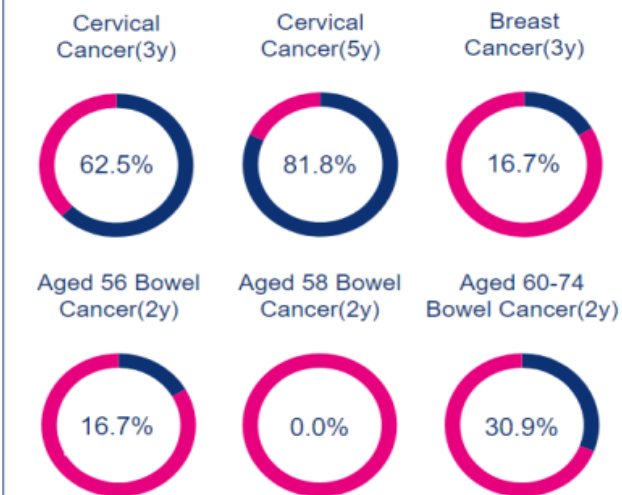
### Screening uptake percentages



### Screening Uptake Percentage



### Screening Uptake Percentage



Data source: Clinical Effectiveness Group dashboards

# Barriers to participation

- Reasons for not engaging with screening – from focus groups, co-production workshops and on-street surveys.
  - Lack of trust in health service/government – historic and intergenerational.
  - Cultural barriers
    - “It’s Gods will”.
    - Fatalism – “nothing I can do”.
    - Fear that others may know they have had the test.
    - Cervical – fear of losing virginity or people will think they are promiscuous.
  - Lack of understanding of screening services – feel well so don’t need to be screened.
  - Language barriers – understanding the invitation and/or at appointments.
  - Fearful the test might be painful.
  - Bad past experience.
  - Fear of discrimination – e.g. for trans people
  - Structural barriers:
    - Location of the screening sites –distance, transport.
    - May not be wheelchair accessible.
    - Costs of travel.



# Improving screening uptake – raising awareness, reducing inequalities

**NO TIME FOR CANCER.**

Screening every 3 years has lowered the cases of late-stage breast cancer. If you're aged between 50 and 70, act now on your NHS breast screening invitation.

**MAKE TIME TO GET SCREENED**

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

Live Through This

**"THERE WAS NO STUMBLING OVER PRONOUNNS AT MY BREAST SCREENING."**

**BEST FOR MY CHEST**

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

BestForMyChest.com is a breast cancer screening campaign led by, and for, the LGBTQ+ community.

the eve appeal

**YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**Bleeding after the menopause is not normal**  
Tell your doctor. Get it checked.

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

**BOWEL CANCER**

**IT'S NOT A GAME.**

Any of these sound familiar?

- A CHANGE IN YOUR BOWEL HABITS
- BLOOD IN YOUR POO
- DISCOMFORT OR ABDOMINAL PAIN

If you recognise any of these symptoms, see your GP

It's your life, it's not a game.

**GET CHECKED.**

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR GP TODAY.

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

**Get life-saving advice on bowel cancer**

We are hosting a free session on bowel cancer, with a talk from one of our local doctors. You will learn how to do a test which could save your life.

**Waltham Forest Islamic Association**  
439-451 Lea Bridge Rd  
London E10 7EA

2.00pm on 13 March  
at Lea Bridge Road Mosque  
(female session)

6.00pm on 12 March  
at Lea Bridge Road Mosque  
(male session)

Speakers: Dr Muhammad Patel and Dr Jamila Begum

Please come along and encourage your friends and family to join us.

**BRITISH ISLAMIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

Something not feeling quite right?

**tell me about it**

If you've got a worrying symptom that might be cancer, your GP wants to know. So contact your surgery and tell them everything. The sooner you do, the sooner they can help.

[www.nhs.uk/healthcare-teams/111](http://www.nhs.uk/healthcare-teams/111)

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

**Muslimsisterhood**

**NHS**  
North East London  
Cancer Alliance

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer amongst those with a cervix. **Regular screening can save lives.**

To learn more visit:  
[www.allaboutcervicalscreening.co.uk](http://www.allaboutcervicalscreening.co.uk)

# Improving screening uptake - supporting primary care

## PCN Cancer Facilitators

- Funded Catch-22 to provide PCN Cancer Facilitators to work with PCNs to support delivery of the PCN DES.
- Replaces the service previously available through CRUK.
- Focussing on supporting PCNs to increase uptake of bowel and cervical screening – looking at data, coding and QI projects etc.

## Screening guides

- Developed guides for GPs with tips to increase uptake of bowel and cervical cancer screening at a practice level, with support from CRUK.
- The guides are on the NEL Cancer Alliance Website.

## Bowel screening reminder calls

- Funded by the Cancer Alliance, but commissioned by TNW.
- Service provided by Community Links
- Call patients who have not returned their screening kit after six months to remind them and order another kit, if necessary.
- Commissioned until the end of September 2023.
- Awaiting service evaluation.

# Projects in development

## Text reminder pilot

- Using Eclipse to identify and text patients who have not returned their bowel screening kit.
- Initial pilot is only for 5 practices, but can scale up following evaluation.
- Link to bowel screening [video](#) is sent along with a symptom questionnaire and the option to request a replacement kit.
- Only rolled out to two practices so far, but engagement has been good.
- Symptomatic patients – 12 have been identified as needing to be referred on an urgent suspected cancer (USC) pathway.

## White other population

- Claremont conducted an audience report to understand views on screening and where/how people like to receive information - focus on Polish, Lithuanian and Turkish/Turkish Cypriot communities.
- Found lack of trust and poor knowledge of screening services as well as signs and symptoms of cancer.
- Cultural and language barriers.
- Currently working with groups from these communities to develop targeted interventions.

## Roma and Traveller communities

- In early stages – still scoping current understanding.
- Would like to increase screening uptake and early diagnosis in this population.
- Hoping to take learning from the Covid vaccine programme.