

Inequalities in Cancer Screening Uptake

Summary from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024

Why is this important?

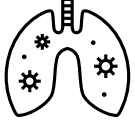
NHS screening for breast, cervical and bowel cancers in target populations supports earlier diagnosis which is essential to reduce cancer deaths. Participation in screening varies both within and between national screening programmes and Lewisham’s performance is below the England level for all three programmes. This JSNA focuses on breast cancer screening uptake which decreased during COVID-19 and has yet to recover. It seeks to understand and reduce the barriers that people face participating and engaging with cancer screening and promote enablers.

Key Facts and Figures

61%

Uptake of bowel cancer screening is steadily increasing locally, although lower than London and England averages


The four most common types of cancer in the UK are the same as for Europe as a whole: female breast, bowel, prostate and lung cancers



63%

Cervical cancer screening coverage was higher than London (58%) but lower than England (66%)


A person with severe mental illness has 124% excess risk of death from cancer than a person without severe mental illness



37%

of invited patients did not attend a breast screening appointment. Levels of non-attendance increase during the winter

People of White (46%) and Black (33%) ethnicity made up most non-responders to breast screening

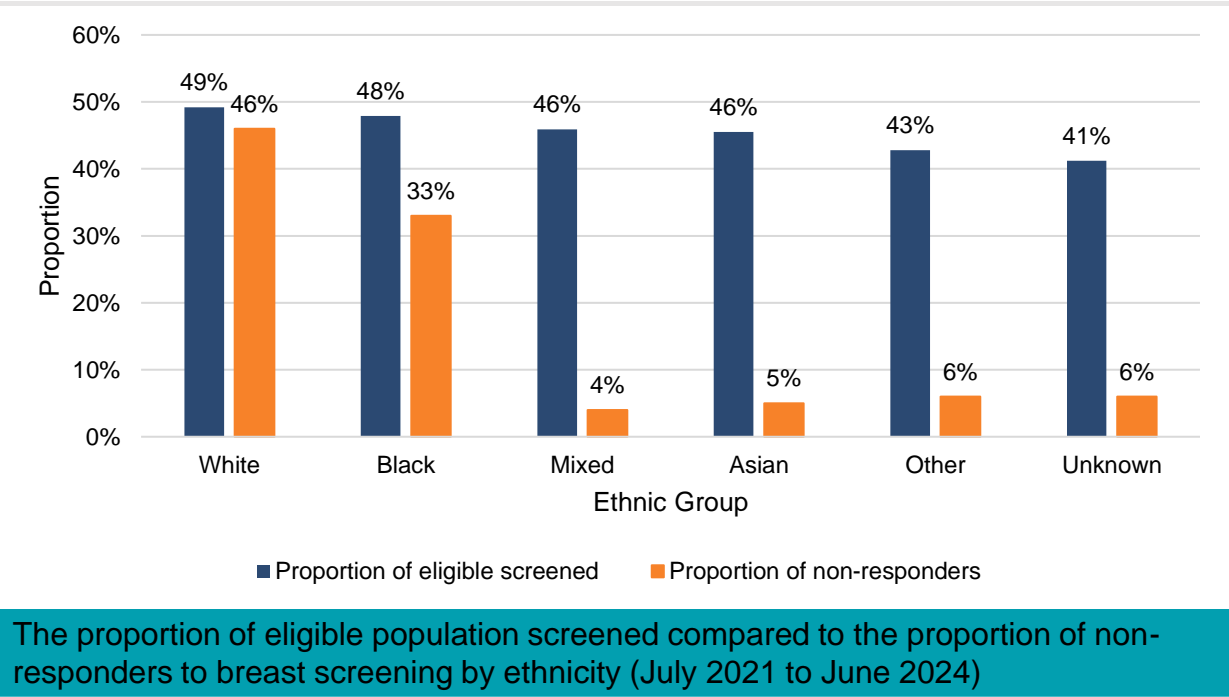


What is happening nationally?

- Bowel cancer screening is offered to men and women between the ages of 54 to 74 every 2 years. The programme is gradually expanding to make it available to eligible people aged 50 and over.
- Breast cancer screening is offered to women between the ages of 50 & 70.
- Cervical cancer screening is offered to women every three years from 25 to 49 years of age and every five years from 50 to 64 years of age.
- Lung cancer screening programme for those aged 55 to 74 years of age, with a GP record including a history of smoking.

What is happening locally?

- Lewisham Cancer Awareness Network (LCAN)
Brings together professionals and community representatives, to improve prevention, screening, and early cancer diagnosis through:
- Attendance at community events throughout the year to raise awareness of cancer signs and symptoms
 - Development of promotional videos representing local people & communities
 - Attendance at local practice nurse forums
 - Offering NHS recommended training to community groups and health professionals



What needs to be done?

- Create accessible information and resources by providing clear, information about cancer screening and its benefits in various formats and languages.
- Develop relatable awareness campaigns through locally tailored campaigns featuring local people and addressing community-specific concerns. Also, engage with faith leaders, community champions, and local organizations to build trust and facilitate communication.
- Improve access by offering convenient appointment times, locating services in accessible areas with potential for walk-in appointments, where possible co-located with other services, and consider appropriate long-term placement of mobile (breast screening) units.