

News release
20 March 2017

AYRSHIRE AND ARRAN GP REMINDS PEOPLE NOT TO IGNORE A THREE WEEK COUGH

Locals encouraged to get symptom checked sooner rather than later

A GP from NHS Ayrshire and Arran has today (20 March 2017) stressed the importance of people getting checked if they've had a cough for three weeks or more.

Dr Hugh Brown urged those who have a persistent cough, or have noticed someone with the symptom, not to delay seeing their GP – stressing that they won't be wasting anyone's time.

The reminder comes on the back of the Scottish Government's Detect Cancer Early (DCE) campaign, fronted by Sir Alex Ferguson, which aims to drive awareness that a cough for three weeks or more could be a sign of lung cancer.

The campaign encourages those with the symptom to get checked by their GP sooner rather than later as the earlier lung cancer is found, the easier it is to treat and the higher the chance of survival.

Since DCE began, the percentage of people diagnosed with Stage I lung cancer has increased by 35.6 per cent.

Recent research highlighted almost two thirds (61 per cent) ¹ of adults disagreed that they would put off a trip to the GP for fear of what they might be told. Encouragingly, 88 per cent of adults agree that it's definitely worth getting a cough that isn't clearing up checked by a GP² – a sentiment echoed by Dr Brown.

Dr Hugh Brown, GP, NHS Ayrshire and Arran said:

"If you've had a cough for three weeks or more, your GP wants to see you.

"It's probably nothing to worry about, but if it's something that needs treatment, the earlier it's found, the better.

"There's lots that can be done to treat lung cancer these days, with the survival rate almost 20 times higher for those diagnosed at an early stage, than a late stage.

"So don't put off seeing your GP if you have a concern. You won't be wasting anyone's time, we're here to help."

Lung cancer is one of the most common cancers in Scotland. However, thanks to advances in treatment and increased rates of early detection, more people than ever in Scotland are surviving lung cancer – 250 more a year compared to 25 years ago.

Lorraine Dallas, Director of Information & Support, Roy Castle Lung Foundation said:

"If someone is worried about lung cancer symptoms, such as a cough that has lasted more than three weeks, it is vital to see their GP. We know that if lung cancer is picked up early your chances of being alive five years later are 20 times better. Lung cancer is treatable, potentially curable, so if you are worried, get checked."

For more information visit getcheckedearly.org or call Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation on 0800 358 7200.

- Ends -

For further information contact Consolidated PR on 0131 240 6420 or email scotland@consoldiatedpr.com

Case studies available on request.

Notes to editors:

1. KANTAR TNS attitudinal tracking (9 February 2017)

2 KANTAR TNS attitudinal tracking (9 February 2017)

3. Scottish Cancer Registry, ISD, extracted September 2014, based on patients diagnosed in 2005-2007.

Potential lung cancer symptoms can include:

- A cough you've had for 3 weeks or more.
- A cough you've had for a long time that's got worse or changes.
- Feeling breathless for no reason.
- A chest infection that doesn't clear up.
- Coughing blood.
- Unexplained weight loss.
- Chest or shoulder pains.
- Unexplained tiredness or lack of energy.
- A hoarse voice.