

2026-27 Plan on a Page

This plan sets out the priorities for 2026-27 to improve outcomes for patients in the North East and North Cumbria who receive radiotherapy as part of their cancer treatment. Our work focuses on improving access to radiotherapy and enabling more people to benefit from cutting edge treatments and technology, as well as improving patients' experiences of coming for treatment and quality of life.

Our drivers

- Fit for the Future - NHS 10-year health plan
- The National Cancer Plan for England
- Radiotherapy Service Specification
- Radiotherapy Network Specification

1. Improving access to radiotherapy

1a. Improving CWT and 31/62-day RT performance

- Ongoing work to improve CWT performance to include;
 - Business cases for workforce growth
 - Network agreement on clinical prioritisation
 - Improved CWT for priority patients
 - Pathway analysis for targeted improvements
- Develop and agree network mutual support agreement
- Review and implementation of GIRFT recommendations from review of radiotherapy

1b. Expanding and upskilling the workforce

- Radiotherapy workforce plan to include;
 - Network coordination of recruitment activity
 - Joint network workforce and career promotion activities
 - Network approach to apprenticeships, enhance practice, training and education
 - Network-wide education, training and CPD opportunities

1c. Improve access to innovative treatments and reduce variation

- Improve access to innovative treatments and techniques, including;
 - Surface guided Radiotherapy (SGRT)
 - DIBH for left-sided breast patients
 - SABR for locally advanced non-metastatic pancreatic carcinoma (LANPC)
 - Radium 223 treatments for eligible patients with prostate cancer in Carlisle
 - research and clinical trials
- Address unwarranted clinical variation in identified tumour sites, including network variation report and ProKnow audits

1d. Modernising radiotherapy infrastructure

- Update network equipment audit and replacement schedule
- Work with Providers and ICB Infrastructure Board to agree a clearly defined replacement strategy and capital funding via business cases.

2. Improving patient experience and quality of life

2a. Improving access to patient information

- Release patient information videos about radiotherapy for upper GI and lower GI cancers
- Finalise and publish patient information videos about molecular radiotherapy
- Measure patient awareness of radiotherapy and understanding from;
 - new video content
 - research and clinical trials resources

2b. Reducing health inequalities

- Work with NENC Health Inequalities team to explore projects to address health inequalities, which may include;
 - Improving access to information (easy-read materials)
 - Improved recording of ethnicity data in radiotherapy
 - improving equity of access and exploring barriers to treatment

2c. Improve quality of life

- Sharing good practice of network late effects services
- Working with partners and stakeholders to undertake initial scoping work for development of late effects services