



## Be Clear on Cancer: Third national breast cancer in women over 70 campaign, 2018

**Caveats:** This summary presents the results of the metric on cancers diagnosed. This is one of a series of summaries that will be produced for this campaign, each focusing on a different metric. A comprehensive interpretation of the campaign incorporating a full evaluation of all the metrics is published separately. These metrics should not be considered in isolation.

### Cancers diagnosed

#### The campaign

The third national breast cancer in women over 70 awareness campaign ran from 22 February 2018 to 31 March 2018 in England.

The core campaign messages were;

- 'One in three women who get breast cancer are over 70, so don't assume you're past it.'
- 'A lump isn't the only sign of breast cancer. If you're worried about any changes to your breasts, tell your doctor straight away.'

#### Metric: Cancers diagnosed

This metric considers whether the third national breast cancer campaign had an impact on the number of newly diagnosed cases of malignant breast cancer (ICD-10 C50) and carcinoma in situ of breast (D05) in women aged 70 years and over, and for all ages combined.

Data was extracted from the national cancer analysis system for the diagnosis period January 2017 to December 2018. The data was grouped into weeks and adjusted to account for bank holidays. Analysis considered the number of breast cancers diagnosed in the analysis period compared with the number of cancers diagnosed in the same period the year before. The analysis period was defined as two weeks after the start of the campaign (week 10 of 2018) to two months after the end of the campaign (week 22 of 2018). A likelihood ratio test was used to calculate the p-value for statistical significance between the two periods.

#### Key message

The third national breast cancer campaign appears to have had an impact on the number of breast cancers diagnosed in women aged 70 years and over.

## Results

Comparing the analysis period to the comparison period, for women aged 70 years and over, there was a statistically significant increase of 11.3% (4,135 in 2017 to 4,603 in 2018) in the number of malignant breast cancers diagnosed. There was a statistically significant 20.8% increase (303 in 2017 to 366 in 2018) in the number of carcinoma in situ diagnosed for this age group.

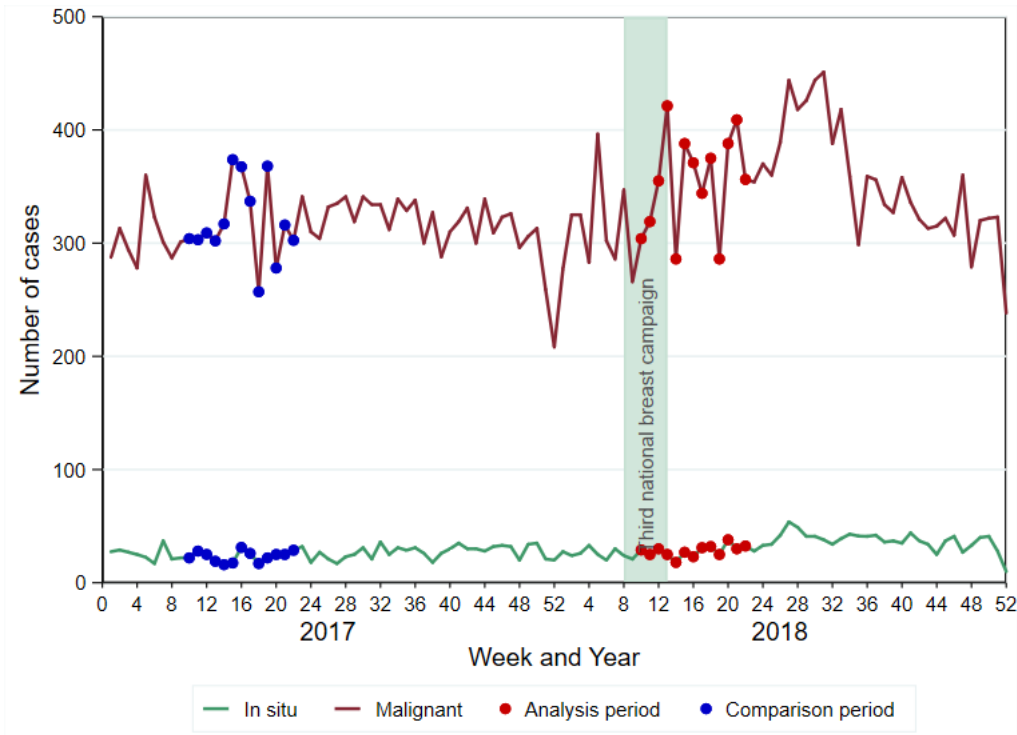
Comparing the analysis period to the comparison period, for women of all ages, there was an increase of 1.9% (12,371 in 2017 to 12,602 in 2018) in the number of malignant breast cancers diagnosed. There was a 5.2% increase (1,803 in 2017 to 1,897 in 2018) in the number of carcinoma in situ diagnosed. These increases were not statistically significant (Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer March 2017 to June 2017 and March 2018 to June 2018, England**

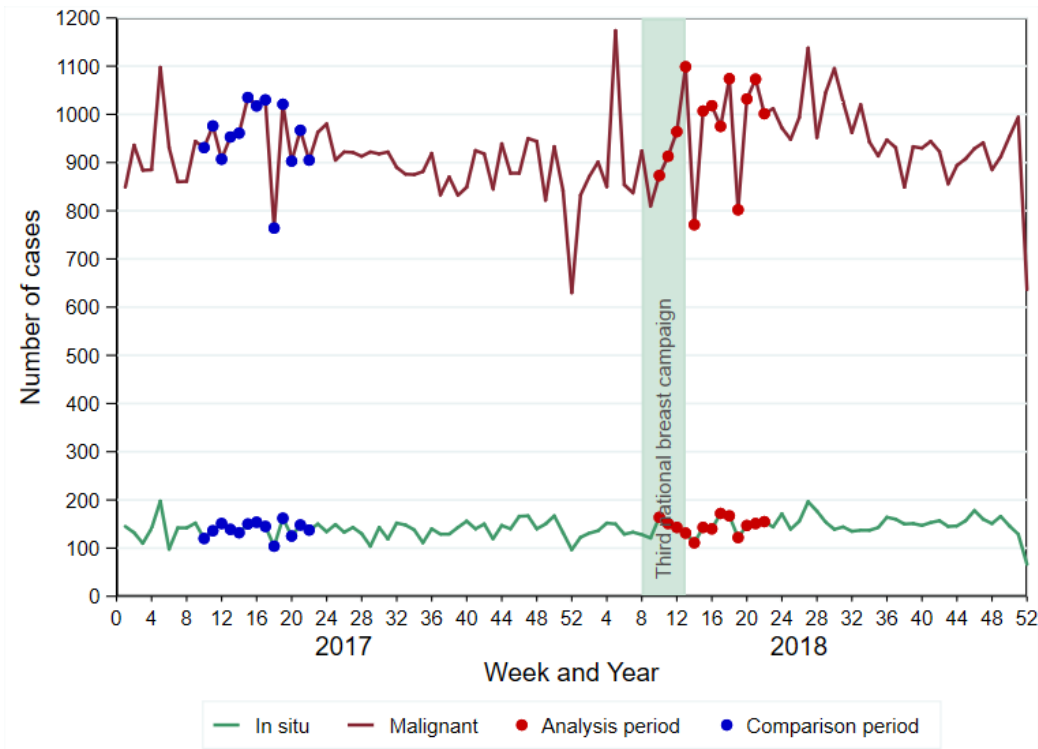
Age group	Cancer type	March to June 2017	March to June 2018	Percentage change	P-value
70 and over	Malignant	4,135	4,603	11.3	<0.001
	In situ	303	366	20.8	0.015
All ages	Malignant	12,371	12,602	1.9	0.143
	In situ	1,803	1,897	5.2	0.122

**Figure 1: Number of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer by week, England, January 2017 to December 2018, a) 70 and over and b) all ages**

**a) 70 years and over**



**b) all ages**



## Conclusions

There was a statistically significant increase in the number of malignant breast cancers and carcinoma in situ diagnosed in women aged 70 years and over.

The third national breast cancer in women over 70 campaign appears to have had an impact on the number of malignant breast cancer diagnosed.

Other metrics being evaluated include GP attendances, urgent GP referrals, conversion and detection rates and emergency presentations.

## Considerations

In general, cancer incidence is increasing which may have an impact on trends over time for this and other metrics, and so the results must be considered with these underlying trends in mind.

Where the results are statistically significant there is some evidence for an impact of the campaign, although underlying trends and other external factors (for example other awareness activities, changing referral guidance) may also affect the results.

Campaigns are more likely to have a greater impact on metrics relating to patient behaviour (for example symptom awareness and GP attendance with relevant symptoms) and use of the healthcare system (for example urgent GP referrals for suspected cancer), compared to disease metrics (for example incidence, and stage at diagnosis).

Find out more about Be Clear on Cancer at:  
[www.ncin.org.uk/be\\_clear\\_on\\_cancer](http://www.ncin.org.uk/be_clear_on_cancer)  
[www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer](http://www.nhs.uk/be-clear-on-cancer)