

Life-saving lung checks come to north east London

Residents who are aged between 55 and 74, who are current smokers or who have ever smoked, are being invited to take advantage of a new, free opportunity to have their lungs checked as part of a national NHS pilot called the Targeted Lung Health Check Programme.

Our Targeted Lung Health Check team has been working hard to get this service up and running and we have now gone live in Barking and Dagenham, where smoking prevalence is the highest. Over 14,000 residents in Barking and Dagenham should expect to receive an invitation over the next 12 months. We are planning to expand this service to other areas later this year and into next year.

This programme is being delivered by the North East London Cancer Alliance, working in partnership with Barts Health NHS Trust, Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust, Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, our local GPs, and InHealth, who are providing the scanner trucks, as well as resources to support the whole process for patients.

Lung checks are by invite only and letters are currently being sent out to those who are eligible. It is really important for people to follow the instructions in the letter and keep their appointment.

Dr Rebecca Taylor, Clinical Director for the Targeted Lung Health Check Programme, explains: “A Lung Health Check is a free MOT of the lungs. It finds out how well your lungs are working and aims to rule out any serious conditions. Often, early problems with the lungs do not cause any symptoms. It is therefore important for people to attend even if they are fit and healthy.

“Most of the time nothing is found, but if there are any problems with how your lungs are working, such as cancer, finding out early can make treatment simpler and more successful. The outcome of treatment for lung cancer is much better when it is diagnosed at an early stage, so we will be helping to save lives.”

The lung health check takes place in two stages. The first is an initial phone assessment with a specially trained health care professional. If the assessment finds the person to be at high risk, they are offered a scan of the lungs for further investigation.

Scans are simple and safe, and are taking place for those who are invited in a dedicated scanning truck located at Barking Sporthouse and Gym at Mayesbrook Park.

The Targeted Lung Health Check programme also aims to promote healthier lifestyles with advice about stopping smoking and residents will be encouraged to get in touch with their local stop smoking services when they have their appointment.

Residents across London can also visit www.stopsmokinglondon.com or call the Smoking Helpline on 0300 123 1044 to get advice about how to stop smoking.

Femi Odewale, Managing Director of the North East London Cancer Alliance, says: “It is great news that we can start offering such a vital service to our local residents, which has the potential to save many lives. The team has put in a lot of effort to set up this new service, and I want to thank them for all their hard work. We look forward to seeing the results and to expanding this to other areas in north east London.”

If you have any questions about Targeted Lung Health Checks, please email the team at nelondon.lungcheck@nhs.net or visit our [web pages](#).