

**Sarcoma cancer now diagnosed in 15 people a day in the UK**  
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More than 5300 people are now being diagnosed with sarcoma cancer every year in the UK, national charity Sarcoma UK has revealed.

Sarcoma is cancer of the bone and soft tissue which can develop anywhere in the body, making it one of the most difficult cancers to diagnose. The majority of people are diagnosed when their sarcoma is the size of a large baked bean tin.

Historical data suggested the number of annual UK diagnoses was around 3800, whilst this new data indicates that sarcoma is more common than previously believed.

The data, released as part of Sarcoma Awareness Week, is taken from the most recent sets of complete sarcoma data from the four UK nations\*. The data project, led by the charity, marks the first time in almost a decade that such information has been collated consistently.

With more than 100 sub-types of the disease, scientific understanding of sarcoma remains modest compared to more common cancers such as breast or prostate. Although momentum in sarcoma research has accelerated in recent years, the low incidences in sub-types can present a challenge to researchers when it comes to both recruitment and statistical significance of results. In 2015, sarcoma made up 1.3% of all UK cancers diagnosed in that year.

Although survival rates have crept up incrementally in the last two decades, the outlook for people diagnosed with sarcoma remains challenging, with the five-year sarcoma survival rate at 55%.

Sarah McDonald, Acting Chief Executive of Sarcoma UK, said: "It's time to take sarcoma seriously. For the first time in years, we have a fuller, accurate picture of how sarcoma is affecting the UK population.

"We had suspected, based on the sheer numbers of people contacting Sarcoma UK for support and information every year, that the historical figure of 3800 diagnoses a year just wasn't an accurate representation of what was really happening.

"We speak to people affected by this cancer every day and are very much aware the scale of destruction it is capable of. Although the breakthroughs in our knowledge of sarcoma are starting to come through, there's clearly a long way to go in terms of fully understanding its behaviour, how it spreads and crucially how we develop better treatments for it in the future. This new data now gives us a solid baseline from which to monitor the disease over the coming years."

Sarcoma Awareness Week runs 2-8 July 2018. You can follow its progress through the hashtag #SarcomalsCancer and by visiting Sarcoma UK's website [sarcoma.org.uk/SAW](http://sarcoma.org.uk/SAW).

\*The National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service (NCRAS), Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit, the Scottish Cancer Registry and the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry.

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### **Notes to editors**

For further information, please contact Bevis Man, Communications Director at Sarcoma UK: [bevis.man@sarcoma.org.uk](mailto:bevis.man@sarcoma.org.uk) or 07931 254 697.

### **About sarcoma cancer**

- Sarcoma is a type of cancer.
- 15 people a day are diagnosed with sarcoma cancer in the UK.
- Sarcomas are uncommon cancers that can develop anywhere in the body, including the muscle, bone, tendons, blood vessels and fatty tissues.
- There are around 100 different sub-types of known sarcoma.
- Sarcoma UK is a national charity that funds research, offers support and campaigns for better treatments.

### **About Sarcoma UK**

Sarcoma UK is the only cancer charity in the UK focusing on all types of sarcoma. Now one of the biggest funders of sarcoma research in the UK, having invested more than £2 million so far into a research grants programme, the charity also runs a flagship support service to anyone affected by sarcoma cancer. Find out more by visiting [sarcoma.org.uk](http://sarcoma.org.uk)