

East Midlands Cancer Alliance (EMCA) Board Briefing

Meeting held 24th November 2025

For the attention of EMCA Board members, Accountable Officers, CEOs, Cancer Senior Responsible Officers (SROs), Cancer Managers and Cancer Leads in ICBs and Trusts:

The East Midlands Cancer Alliance (EMCA) Board met on 24th November 2025 via MS Teams to review the work and progress of partner organisations across EMCA. Richard Mitchell chaired the meeting. The Board has representation from the five East Midlands ICBs across both commissioning, medical and provider organisations. It also has representatives from Specialised Commissioning, Public Health, Workforce Training and Education, Macmillan, and Cancer Research UK. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed contributions from all colleagues.

National Update & Planning Guidance

Vicky Millward, Managing Director of EMCA, shared an update on the forthcoming National Cancer Plan, reaffirming the UK Government's commitment to early diagnosis. She announced that the National Cancer Team has agreed a three-year funding settlement for Cancer Alliances, including additional targeted investment for the National Lung Cancer Screening Programme. Vicky emphasised the importance of close collaboration with ICBs to ensure this funding is allocated effectively.

She also highlighted EMCA's Quarter Two achievements:

- Launch of the Midlands Cancer Alliance Life Sciences Hub, strengthening innovation and collaborative partnerships.
- Expansion of the Lung Cancer Screening Programme across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, resulting in over 400 cancers diagnosed, with an impressive early diagnosis rate of more than 71%.
- Outstanding FIT CAN04 performance, with the East Midlands leading nationally and Leicester achieving a remarkable 93.4%.
- First alliance to diagnose a pancreatic cancer through the Pancreatic Cancer Case Finding pilot.

Performance Update

Yasmin Bhatt, EMCA Operational Performance Senior Programme Manager, provided an update on performance metrics, noting the ongoing challenges across the region.

To drive pathway improvements, the Board was introduced to the forthcoming EMCA Days Matter Campaign—a 100-day initiative aimed at delivering rapid, sustainable transformation in high-priority cancer diagnosis pathways. The campaign will complement existing programmes, with a strong focus on process optimisation, automation, and enhancing digital infrastructure.

Programme Overview

Gurjit Pahal, EMCA Associate Director of Programmes, presented an update on programme delivery, confirming that most initiatives remain on track. However, operational performance, the skin pathway, lung cancer screening, and liver surveillance are currently rated amber due to specific operational or resource-related risks. Targeted improvement actions are underway, supported by SDF funding.

Robotics Update

Alastair Simpson, EMCA Clinical Director, presented plans to expand robotic surgical platforms across the region. The initiative aims to increase capacity for robotic surgery in line with the NHS 10-year Health Plan, which sets a target for 80% of minimally invasive procedures to be performed robotically.

Alastair emphasised the need for a collaborative approach between EMCA and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). A detailed paper outlining the procurement strategy and targeted service improvements will be brought to a future Board meeting for consideration.

End of Treatment Summary

Dr Jonathan Gregory, Clinical lead for Automated End of Treatment Summary Project, presented the development and outcomes of an EMCA-funded pilot for automated End of Treatment Summaries (EOTS), co-designed with patients and clinicians.

The pilot uses routinely collected data to generate patient-friendly summaries, reducing clinician workload while improving accessibility for individuals with varying levels of health literacy.

Following its success, the initiative is now being scaled to additional tumour sites and Trusts across the region.

Lung Cancer Screening

Sam Errington, EMCA Early Diagnosis Programme Manager, provided an update on the Lung Cancer Screening Programme. Sam outlined progress across Integrated Care Boards (ICBs):

- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – nearing full rollout.
- Lincolnshire – procurement process is being finalised.
- Northamptonshire and Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) – preparing to commence procurement.
- Derbyshire – experiencing governance-related delays but planning for rapid implementation once resolved.

The Lung Cancer Screening Programme is a national initiative, with full regional rollout anticipated by 2030.

Tele dermatology

Yasmin Bhatt, EMCA Operational Performance Senior Programme Manager, provided an update on the delayed rollout of teledermatology across the region, highlighting:

- Current progress – teledermatology has been implemented at two providers sites.
- Next steps – Ongoing engagement with ICB Programme Managers to identify barriers and strengthen clinical involvement.

EMCA Finance Update

Vicky, EMCA Managing Director, presented a position statement on financial allocations, confirming that associated risks are being effectively managed and that no further action is required beyond formal board acknowledgment.

Centre of Psychosocial Excellence Update

Adam Andrews, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland ICB Lead, provided an update on the East Midlands Centre of Psychosocial Excellence. The East Midlands Psychosocial Centre of Excellence (CPE) pilot is nearing its planned conclusion, with EMCA extending funding until March 2026 to ensure continuity of care and a managed transition. Conversations are continuing with ICBs to determine how services will be provided in the future.

Life Sciences Hub

Alison Tonge, Executive Director of Strategy, Innovation and Planning at Arden and Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit, presented progress on the development of the Midlands Cancer Alliance's Life Sciences Partnership Hub. The Hub is intended to strengthen collaboration between industry and healthcare partners, driving innovation across cancer pathways. Its core objectives include aligning industry solutions with regional cancer challenges, coordinating collaborative projects, and scaling successful innovations to improve patient outcomes and system efficiency.

Any Other Business

Vicky acknowledged the challenging circumstances our workforce continues to navigate and expressed her sincere appreciation to all Board members for their unwavering commitment to enhancing cancer services for our communities.

Documents for Information

- Specialised Commissioning
- Screening Report
- Specialised Commissioning Report
- EMCA Communication Report
- EMCA Newsletter – [November 2025](#)

Future Board Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 26th January 2026
Time: 01:00–03:00pm
Venue: MS Teams

EMCA ICB Leads contact details:

East Midlands ICSSs	EMCA Board Representative/s ICS Lead
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland	Adam Andrews, Adam.andrews@nhs.net
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