NHS
North East London

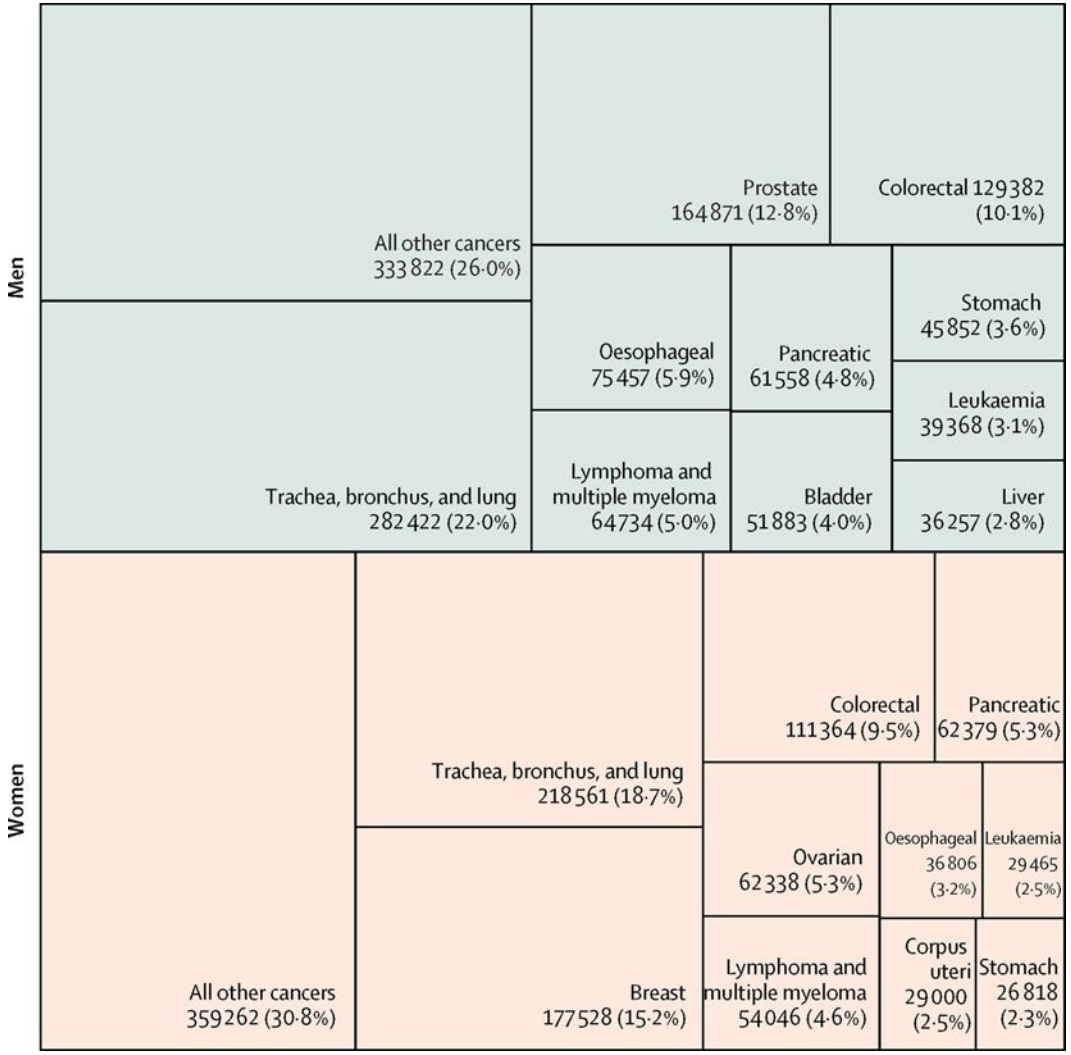
Addressing cancer in the Black community in Redbridge

Dr. Jyoti Sood
Clinical Pathway Lead, Redbridge Place Based Partnership
Ealy Cancer Diagnosis Lead, NEL @ TARACC Cancer Conference

- **Cancer** is not just one disease, but a group of over 200 different diseases.
- Cancer is an abnormal growth of **cells**.
  - Each cell contains a set of instructions (DNA).
  - The instructions tell the cell when to reproduce and when to die.
  - Sometimes, the instructions (DNA) can be damaged and can result in a **mutation**.
  - If cells keep reproducing in an uncontrolled way, a mass forms.

Leading cause of mortality

- Cancer is the leading cause of death overall in the UK, accounting for 28% of all deaths in the UK. Of the 25 leading causes of death by Years of life lost from mortality (YLL), 12 are cancers
  - Lung cancer (2nd most common cause of death)
  - Colorectal cancer (8th)
  - Breast cancer (9th)
  - Pancreatic cancer (13th)
  - Other cancers (16th)
  - Oesophageal cancer (18th)
  - Brain Cancer (19th)
  - Prostate cancer (20th)
  - Leukaemia (21st)
  - Stomach cancer (22nd)
  - Lymphoma (23rd)
  - Ovarian cancer (24th)
  - Lung, bowel, breast and prostate cancers together accounted for almost half (45%) of all cancer deaths in the UK
  - Smoking is the largest cause of cancer in the UK



Rashid, T, Bennett JE, Muller DC, Cross AJ, Pearson-Stuttard J, Asaria P, Daby HI, Fecht D, Davies B, Ezzati M (2024). Mortality from leading cancers in districts of England from 2002 to 2019: a population-based, spatiotemporal study. *The Lancet Oncology* 25(1), pp. 86-98

Incidence and Mortality

Rates

1 Higher Incidence

UK Black Caribbean individuals have a higher risk of developing certain cancers, such as prostate, breast, and colorectal cancer.

2 Increased Mortality

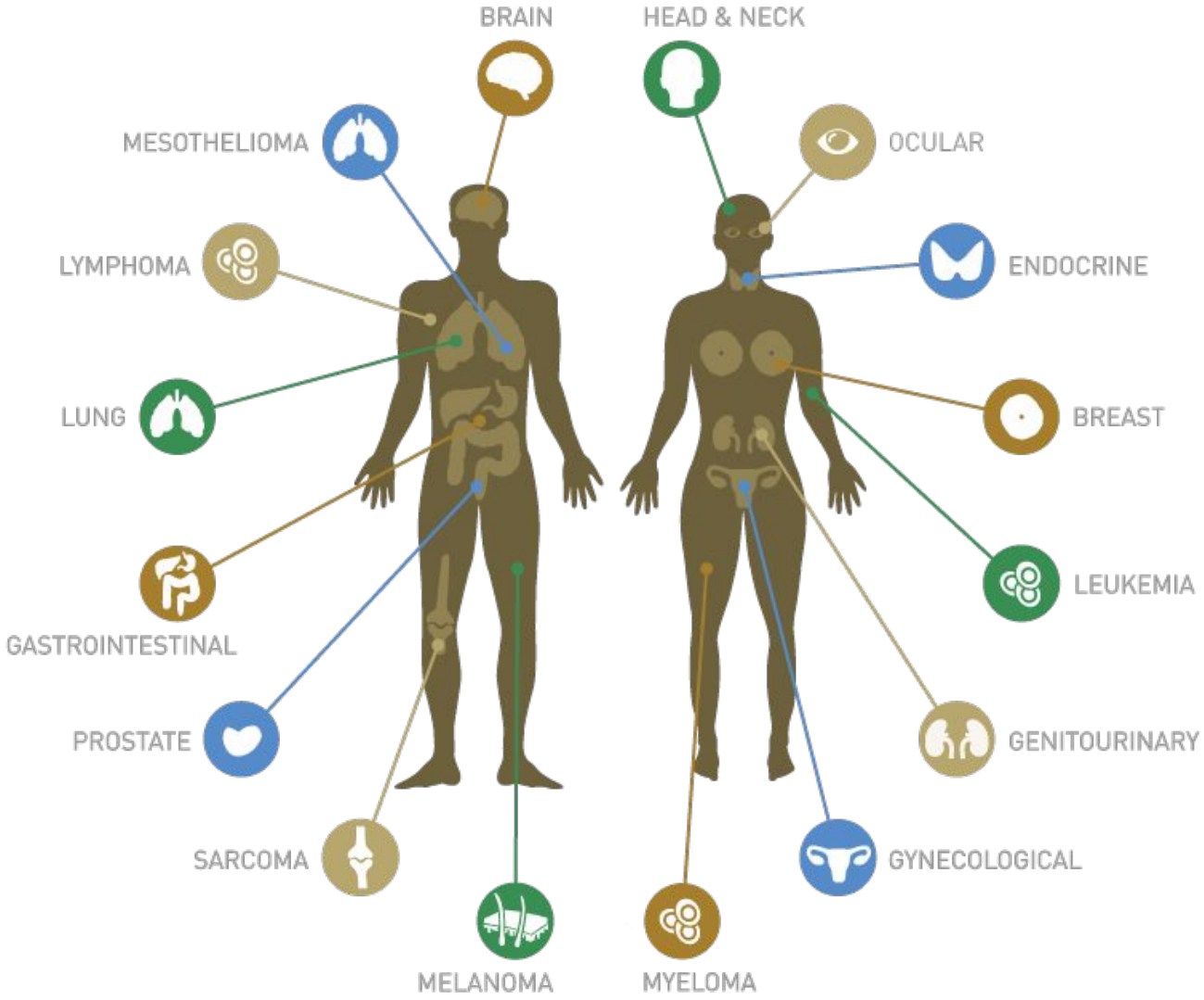
Cancer mortality rates are also significantly higher among UK Black Caribbean communities, often due to late-stage diagnosis and limited access to quality care.

3 Factors Involved

Socioeconomic disparities, cultural barriers, and systemic biases in the healthcare system all contribute to these alarming cancer disparities.

What causes cancer?

- Over time, a cell takes many "hits."
- "Hits" come from:
  - what you are exposed to (environmentally, occupationally, radiation, viruses), and
  - how you live (tobacco, diet, alcohol, activity, etc.)



- ***"Black men in England are twice as likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer as white men. They are also twice as likely to die from the disease. "***

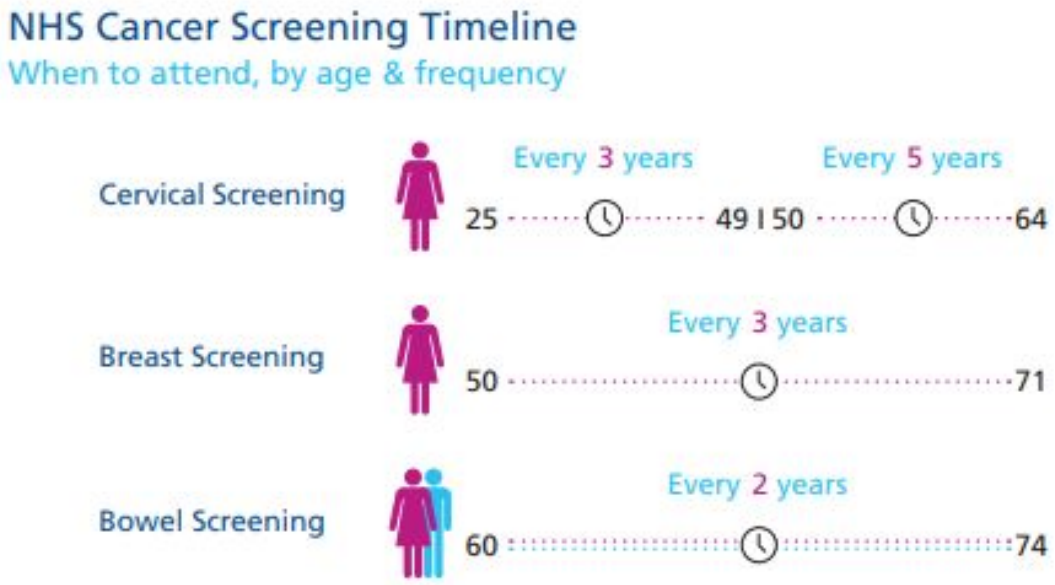
- "Caribbean women are more likely to receive a late-stage diagnosis than White women"

- "African women have higher odds of being diagnosed with late-stage breast, uterine, colon and ovarian cancers."

- "uterine cancer specifically, both Caribbean and African women are significantly more likely to be diagnosed at stages 3 and 4 than White women."

Screening

- Breast: Age 50 and 53. Then you'll be invited every 3 years until you turn 71.
- Cervical: age 25 -49 , 3 yearly , the 50-64, 5 yearly
- Bowel: aged 60 to 74 years., but expanding for 50-59s



Barriers to Cancer Screening and Early Detection

1 **Lack of Awareness**

Many in the Black community are unaware of recommended cancer screening guidelines and the importance of early detection.

2 **Mistrust in Healthcare**

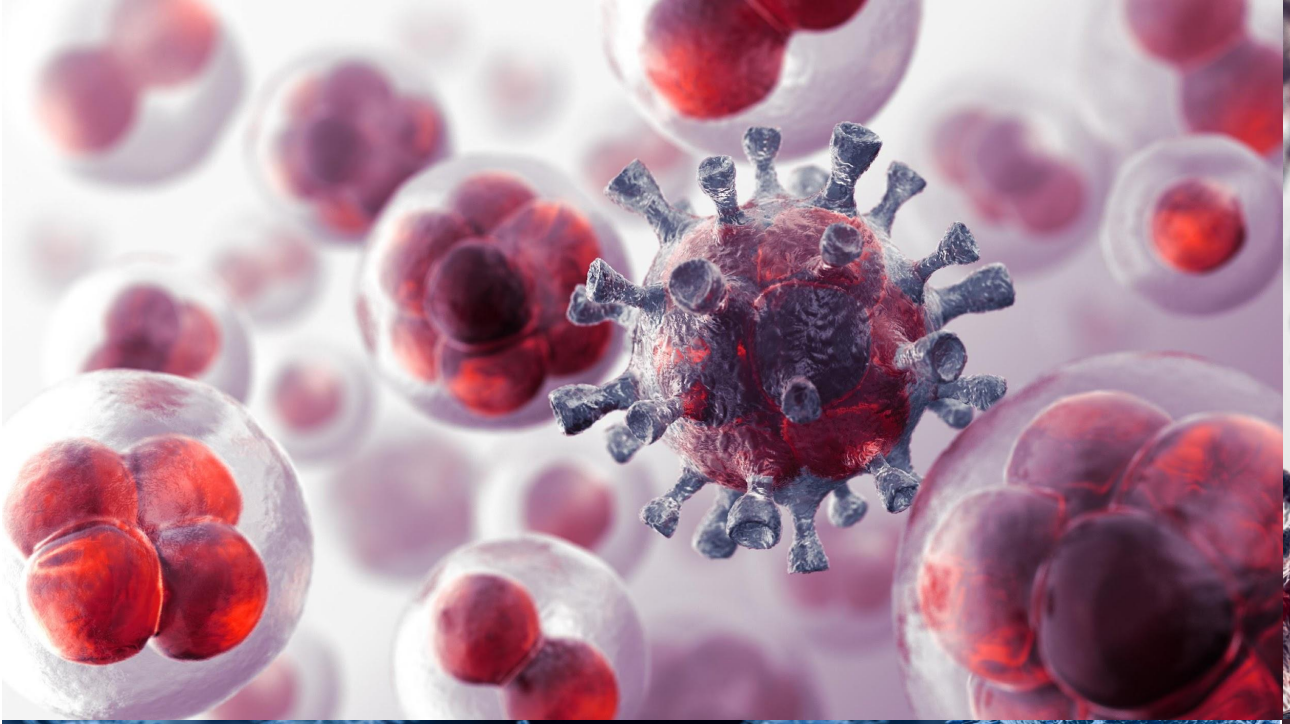
Historical experiences of discrimination and mistreatment have led to a deep-seated mistrust of the healthcare system.

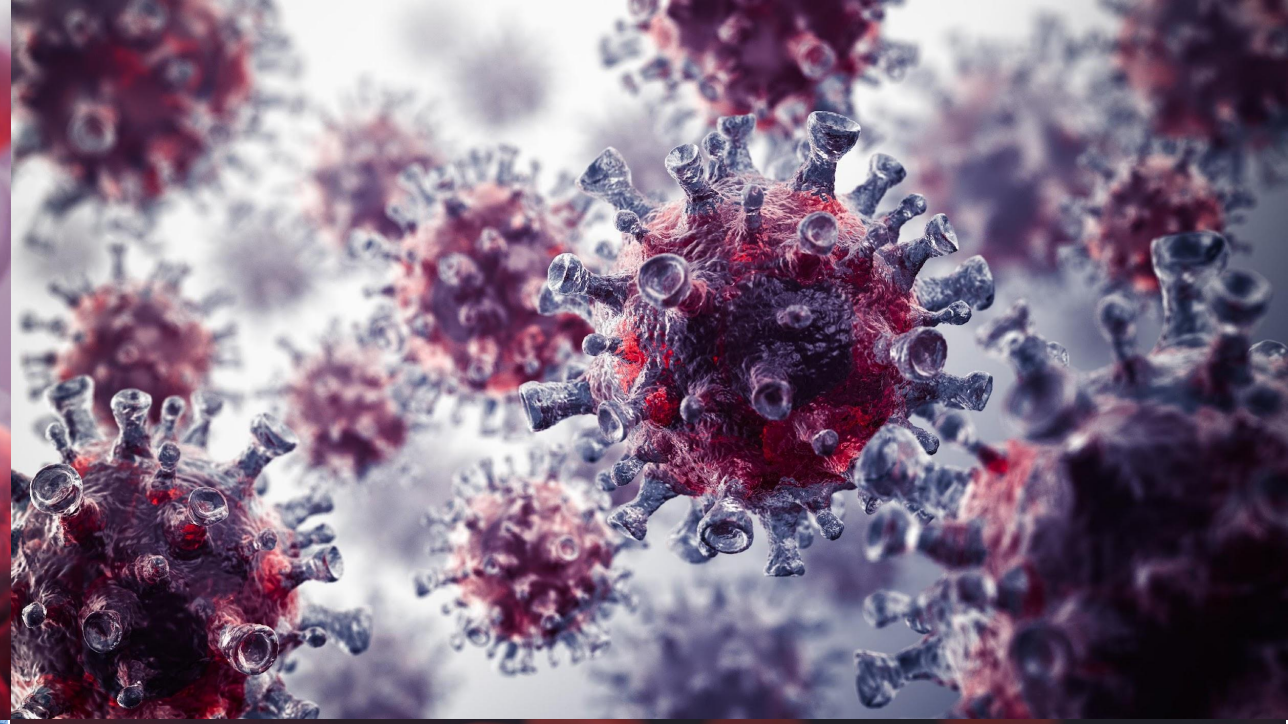
3 **Cultural Barriers**

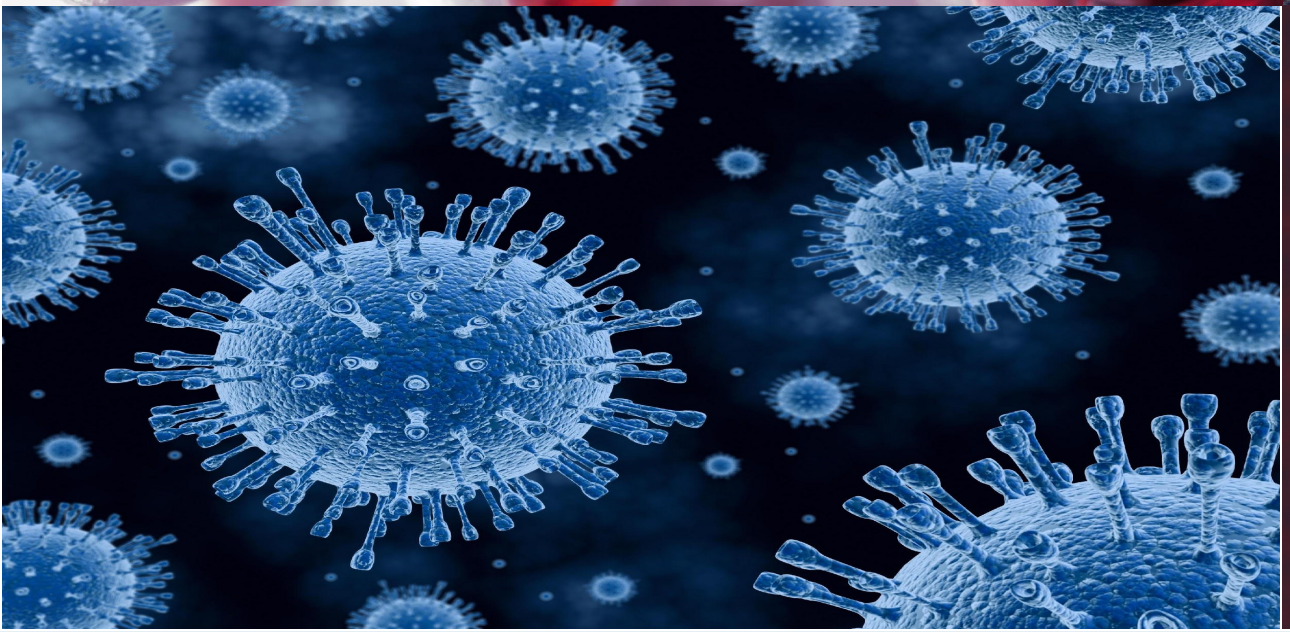
Stigma, fear, and cultural beliefs can prevent individuals from seeking preventive care and timely diagnosis.

4 **Access Challenges**

Barriers such as transportation, language, and engagement with confidence limit access to cancer screening services.





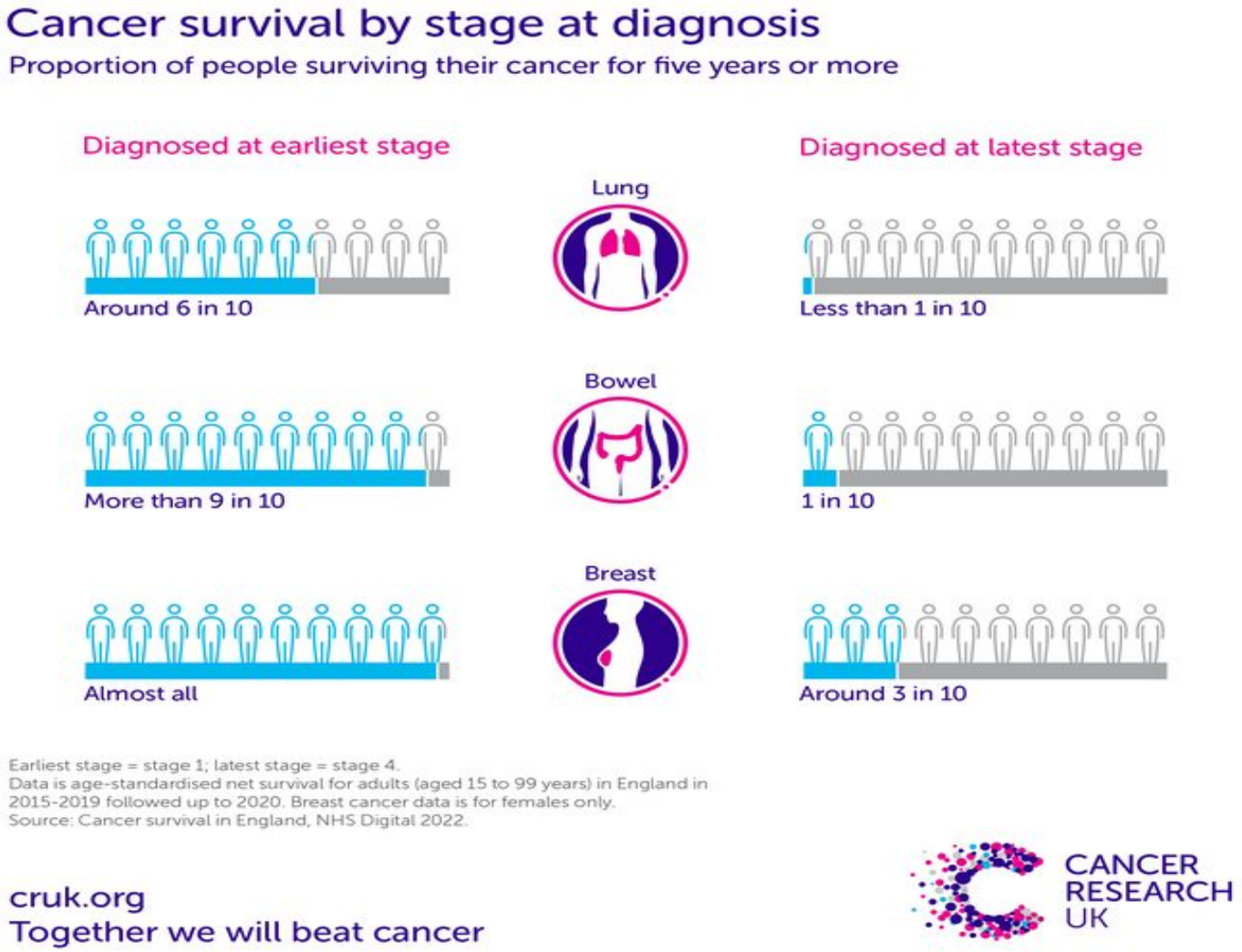


FIRST THING THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN I SAY…….

Delayed diagnosis

- “women from an ethnic minority background were more likely to report they didn’t know any warning signs and symptoms of cancer compared to White women!
- “ report finding it embarrassing and not feeling confident talking about their symptoms “
- “worried about how their pay or earnings would be affected if they needed further tests or treatment”
- “anticipate difficulties with remote consultations”

Early Diagnosis of cancer



Signs and symptoms

- Cough –over…….?
- Change in bowel habits /Bleeding PR……?
- Headache ……. ?
- Blood in urine ……?
- Frequency of urination/ unable to hold in a man …….?
- Bloating in a women …….?
- New onset abdo pain ……. ?
- Lump ….. ?
- Weight loss, Appetite loss –unexplained…. ?
- Post menopausal bleed …… ?

Pathway

GP - 2WW or direct diagnostics

Hospital

1. **Faster Diagnosis Standard**: a diagnosis or ruling out of cancer **within 28 days of referral** (set at 75%)
2. **31-day treatment standard**: commence treatment **within 31 days of a decision to treat** for all cancer patients (set at 96%)
3. **62-day treatment standard**: commence treatment **within 62 days of being referred** or consultant upgrade (set at 85%)

Post cancer care

- Holistic needs assessment
- Review at GP practice – 3 months (diagnosis) and
- 12 months

Conclusion and Call to Action

Urgent Need	Cancer disparities in UK Black African & Caribbean communities require immediate attention and action.
Collaborative Approach	Effective solutions require a coordinated effort between healthcare providers, policymakers, and community stakeholders.
Empowering Communities	Empowering and supporting the UK Black African & Caribbean community is crucial to addressing these persistent cancer health inequities.
Call to Action	Together, we must work to improve cancer prevention, early detection, and access to quality care for the UK Black African & Caribbean population.