

Perci Health

# Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

April 2026



## Education, engagement and inclusion for employees.

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month 2026 is a dedicated awareness campaign aimed at educating people about bowel cancer, its prevention, and the importance of taking part in screening when invited. More than half of bowel cancers are thought to be preventable, and this month helps remind employees to prioritise bowel health and take simple steps to reduce their risk.



## Why promote Bowel Cancer Awareness Month in your workplace?

- While most bowel cancer cases are diagnosed in older adults, diagnosis rates in younger adults are rising rapidly.
- The NHS bowel screening programme starts around age 50, so it's important younger adults know the signs and symptoms to look out for.
- Around one third of people eligible for bowel screening do not take part, despite regular bowel cancer screening reducing the risk of dying from bowel cancer by at least 25%.
- Education and screening support can make a big difference to employees, as well as helping to reduce the costs associated with cancer.

**65%**

Of surveyed employees agreed that cancer prevention and early detection education is important in the workplace.

**55%**

Agreed that employers have an actual responsibility to support cancer prevention and early detection education.

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Given the significant number of people of working age who are affected by cancer, and the devastating impact the illness can have on them and their loved ones, it is vital for employers to appropriately support their staff.

Ian Talbot, CEO, Healix Health Services

## Five easy ways to promote the campaign



01

Share the employee brochure provided in the Perci Health cancer awareness campaign hub.

02

Display the provided posters in areas of high footfall around the workplace, such as breakout areas, kitchens and bathrooms.

03

Share the ready-to-go social media posts on your chosen channels, offering reliable stats about bowel cancer.

04

Post a short awareness message on Slack, Teams or the company intranet, explaining the importance of the campaign.

05

Encourage employees to return screening tests if they have been sent one.

## How to have sensitive conversations during a cancer awareness campaign

Feeling uncomfortable about having conversations about cancer and screening is a significant barrier to running an engaging cancer awareness campaign. Here's how managers can approach them.

- ✓ **DO** Use inclusive language. For example, at Perci, we use 'Eligible people' when we talk about screening.
- ✓ **DO** Signpost employees to reputable information (like the Perci campaign awareness assets) and sources of advice (like Macmillan, NHS, their GP or Perci cancer nurse specialists).
- ✓ **DO** Plan how to respond if an employee raises concerns, before you actually need to.

- ✗ **DON'T** Ask employees whether they are up to date on screening. Instead, direct employees to the NHS app to check the date of their last results.
- ✗ **DON'T** Offer medical advice yourself or share personal stories about screening experiences or cancer.

## How can employers support screening uptake?

It's vital to offer hesitant employees the reassurance they need to overcome barriers to screening. Those who work in bowel screening cite the following reasons for people not returning at-home tests:

- **Embarrassment**  
Many people feel uncomfortable collecting a stool sample and sending it through the post.
- **Fear**  
It's common for people to worry about getting cancer, so they don't return the test for fear of getting a positive result.
- **Lack of support**  
Some people might need support understanding the instructions or completing the test.

Helping employees to understand the importance of bowel screening is a key part of increasing uptake among the workforce. Employers can also support by directing employees who need extra support or need to re-order a test to the NHS bowel screening helpline number (0800 707 6060).

### Trusted bowel screening resources

[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) • [nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk) • [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk) • [cancerresearchuk.org](https://www.cancerresearchuk.org)

It's also a good idea to research screening support local to your workplace.