

State of the Nation Report 2026

Summary of results for people diagnosed with or undergoing surgery for bowel cancer in England and Wales between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024

37,250 people diagnosed with bowel cancer in England and Wales between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024.

Key: **E** England (E) **W** Wales (W) **●** E&W Combined

E England: 35,069 **W** Wales: 2,181

Stage at diagnosis

% of people presenting with stage 1 or stage 2 cancer¹

2021 **2024**
E 46.1% → 47.1%

W 36.6% → 41.3%

Route to diagnosis

% people diagnosed via emergency admission

2022 **2024**
18.6% → 18.7%



Time to diagnosis

median days from diagnosis to treatment decision (England only)³

Urgent suspected cancer referral: 15 days

Routine GP referral: 24 days

Seen by Clinical Nurse Specialist

% people with a diagnosis of bowel cancer seen by a Clinical Nurse Specialist (target >95%) (PI 1)⁴

2022 **2024**
93% → 93%



Peri-operative care

Rectal cancer operations

% of trusts/multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) that performed ≥ 20 major rectal cancer operations (target ≥20) (PI 2)

2023 **2024**
78% → 83%

90-day mortality

90-day mortality among people undergoing surgery (target <5%) (PI 3)

2021 **2024**
2.9% → 2.6%

Unplanned return to theatre

% of people with an unplanned 30-day return to theatre after surgery (target <10%) (PI 4)



2021 **2024**
6.9% → 6.8%

Unplanned readmission

% of people with an unplanned 30-day readmission after surgery (target <15%) (PI 5)

2021 **2024**
11.1% → 11.2%

18-month unclosed ileostomy

% of people with an unclosed diverting ileostomy 18 months after anterior resection (target <35%) (PI 6)⁵



37%
Variation by provider:
13%-83%
(1 April 2019 to
31 March 2024)

Minimally invasive surgery

% of people who underwent major colorectal cancer surgery with a minimally invasive approach (laparoscopic or robotic) (target >50%)



2021 **2024**
70% → 77%

Oncological management

Adjuvant chemotherapy

% of people who received adjuvant chemotherapy for stage 3 colon cancer (target >55%) (PI 7)

(Surgery between 1 April 2022 and 31 December 2024)



67%
Variation by pro-
vider: 45%-88%

Severe acute toxicity

% of people who experienced severe acute toxicity after adjuvant chemotherapy (target <30%) (PI 8)

(Surgery between 1 April 2022 and 31 December 2024)

19%
Variation by provider:
3%-37%

Neo-adjuvant radiotherapy

% of people with rectal cancer who received neo-adjuvant radiotherapy treatment (target 10%-60%) (PI 9)



2021 **2024**
34% → 27%
Variation by provider:
0%-84%

Two-year survival

Two-year survival rate among people undergoing major resection (target >80%) (PI 10)
(Year denotes year of surgery)

2019 **2022**
84.4% → 85.3%

PI: NBOCA Performance Indicator (for a list of the ten NBOCA performance indicators, see main report) 1. Data available for 89.9% of patients in England and 91.4% of patients in Wales 2. Data not available for Wales 3. Analysis not available for Wales 4. Data available for 76.4% of patients in England and 93.8% of patients in Wales 5. This indicator focuses on a small subgroup of patients (patients undergoing anterior resection with a diverting ileostomy), so a wider reporting period is required to ensure sufficient patient numbers for reliable provider-level reporting. *Variation shown is the range across providers.