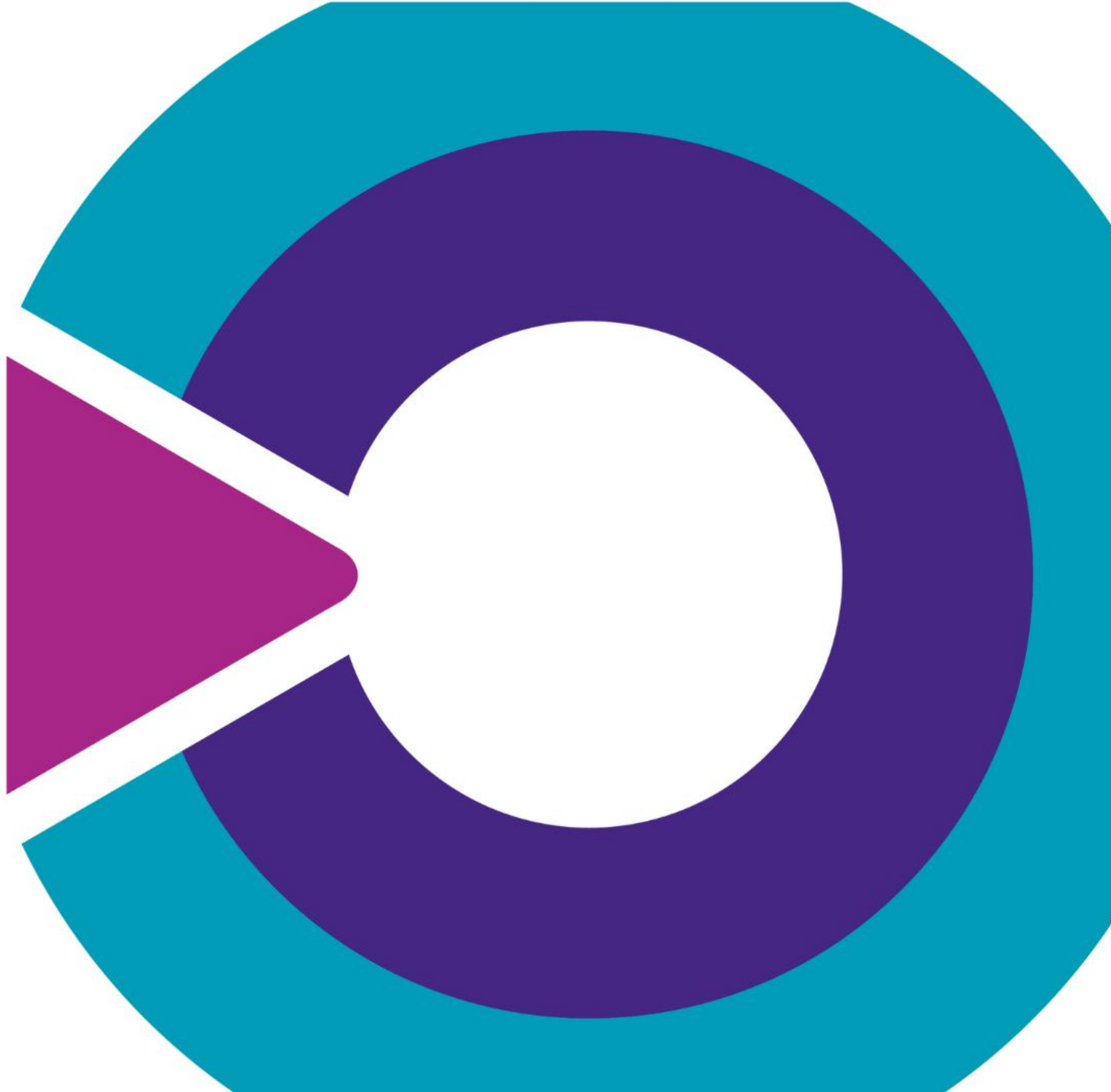




The Clue is at the Counter

Kaly Mohammad in partnership with
Target Ovarian Cancer



About me

- Pharmacist based in NWL.
- Specialising in menopause care and deeply committed to advocating for women's health.
- A passion for cancer awareness and early diagnosis.



Objectives

- Why it matters
- Key national statistics
- What is ovarian cancer and who is most at risk
- Symptoms of ovarian cancer
- Addressing the "Silent Killer" Myth
- Diagnosing Ovarian Cancer – NICE NG12 Guidelines
- Why a community Pharmacist
- Pharmacy Services and OTC products



Why it matters

- Ovarian cancer is the sixth most common cancer in women in the UK.
- Delayed Diagnosis
- Low awareness
- Lack of screening
- Improved survival rates
- Focus on symptoms
- Empowering women



Target
Ovarian
Cancer

The national facts

- Around 7,400 women are diagnosed with ovarian cancer each year in the UK.
- Over 4000 women die from the disease in the UK; that is one women every 2 hrs.
- Just one in three women are diagnosed early (Stage I or II).
- 6th most common cause of cancer death in women, in the UK.
- If diagnosed at earliest stage 93% of women will survive for at least 5 yrs, compared to just 13% of women diagnosed at the most advanced stage.
- Early diagnosis dramatically improves outcomes.



Common symptoms

- Persistent abdominal bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
- Early satiety (feeling full quickly)
- Increased urinary urgency/frequency
- Symptoms occurring ≥ 12 times per month
- Distinguish from IBS, menopause, or UTI

The myth of the 'silent killer'

MYTH: "Ovarian cancer is a silent killer with no symptoms."

REALITY: Ovarian cancer does show symptoms, but they are often non-specific and misdiagnosed.



Clinical guidance

Offer CA125 blood test in primary care for women (especially ≥ 50) with:

- Persistent bloating
 - Pelvic/abdominal pain
 - Appetite loss
-
- **Refer for ultrasound if CA125 is elevated**
 - **Urgent 2WW referral if ultrasound suggests malignancy**

NICE National Institute for
Health and Care Excellence



► Why a community Pharmacist?



Pharmacists: **The Most Accessible Clinicians in the NHS**

- Over 90% of the population lives within a 20-minute walk of a pharmacy
- No appointments needed – accessible 7 days a week in many areas
- Highly trained in clinical assessment, public health, and medication safety

Role in Ovarian Cancer Awareness & Early Detection

- Engage in Healthy Living Pharmacy (HLP) services
- Conduct symptom surveillance during OTC consultations (e.g. bloating, GI issues)
- Provide advice, guidance or signposting to GPs or urgent care
- Educate on cancer screening programmes and debunk myths



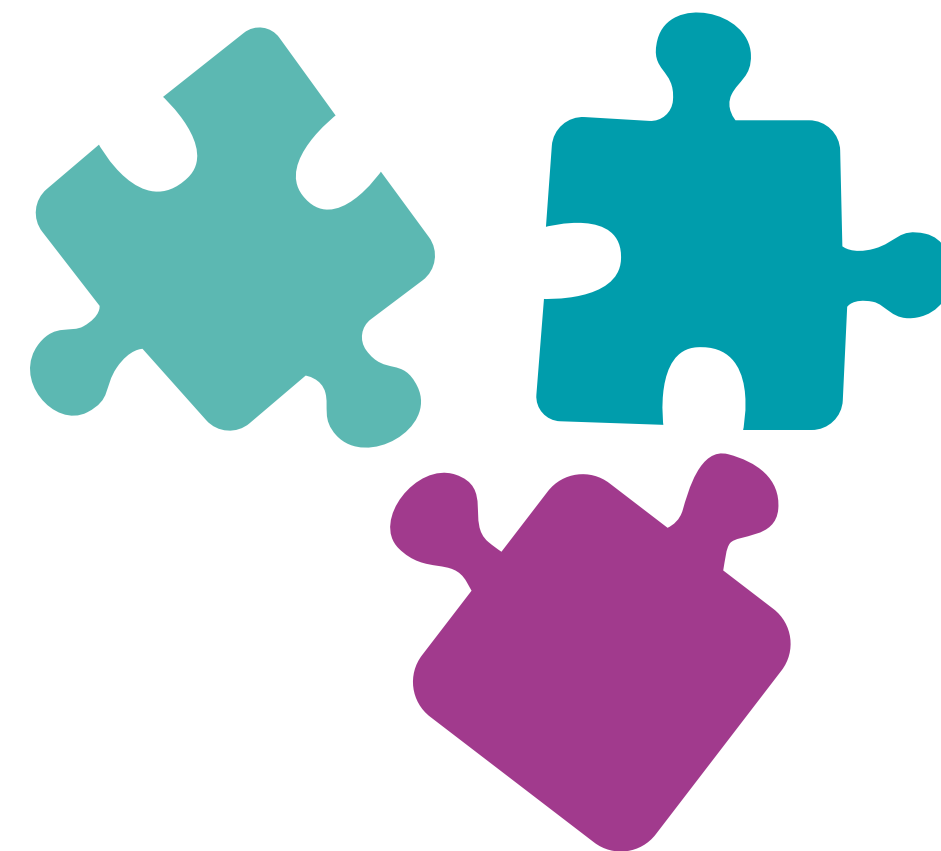
Integration with NHS Services

- Key players in NHS pharmacy contraception, new medicine services, discharge medicine service, and minor ailments schemes
- Pharmacy First
- Pharmacists now have independent prescribing rights (2026 mandate)
- Bridging the gap between public health and primary care



▶ How can you help

- Pharmacists are in a unique position to identify warning signs early.
- You are part of the jigsaw
- Recognising Red Flag Symptoms
- Opportunities for Intervention
- Actions Pharmacists can take
- Collaborating with other Health Professionals



▶ Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs) vs. Ovarian Cancer Symptoms

- Antibiotics given via Pharmacy First
- “Uncomplicated urinary tract infections – Women 16–64 years”
- One of the symptoms of ovarian cancer is “Increased urinary urgency/frequency”

► IBS vs. Ovarian Cancer Symptoms

- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) can cause bloating, abdominal pain, and changes in bowel habits, similar to ovarian cancer.
- IBS is likely to have been diagnosed earlier in life.
- However, IBS symptoms often fluctuate with diet, while ovarian cancer symptoms are more persistent.
- Any new onset symptoms of IBS in women aged over 50 requires advice to see GP.



▶ Menopause vs. Ovarian Cancer Symptoms



- Menopause can lead to symptoms like bloating and changes in urination.
- GINA – accessible OTC

Key takeaway Messages





- Ovarian cancer isn't silent. We just need to listen more closely
- Pharmacists are uniquely positioned on the front lines of early detection and health education, they are more than medicine experts, they are community clinicians.
- Keep ovarian cancer on your radar when patients come in with digestive problems or women's health worries



Supporting early diagnosis



Ovarian cancer symptoms

-  **Persistent bloating**
(not bloating that comes and goes)
-  **Feeling full quickly and/or loss of appetite**
-  **Pelvic or abdominal pain**
(that's from your tummy and to the top of your thighs)
-  **Urinary symptoms**
(needing to wee more urgently or more often than usual)

How to use this diary

Fill in the circle each day you experience a symptom. If you regularly experience any one or more of these symptoms, which are not normal for you, make an appointment to speak to your GP.

Discuss this diary at your appointment to help your GP gain a clearer picture of your symptoms.

What should your GP do?

If you have one or more symptom frequently and persistently your GP should do a CA125 blood test. They may also recommend an ultrasound scan of your ovaries and tummy.

Family history

Do you have two or more relatives on one side of your family (mother or father) diagnosed with cancer? If yes, discuss this with your GP.







Other symptoms


Other symptoms include changes in bowel habits, fatigue or unplanned weight loss.

Any unusual bleeding from the vagina before or after the menopause should always be investigated by a GP.

Contact us

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Patient Information Forum

Registered charity numbers: 1125038 (England and Wales) and SC042920 (Scotland)
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To access our list of references please contact us.

Symptoms	▶ Week 1 _____ Date	▶ Week 2 _____ Date	▶ Week 3 _____ Date	▶ Week 4 _____ Date
 Persistent bloating (not bloating that comes and goes)	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S
 Feeling full quickly and/or loss of appetite	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S
 Pelvic or abdominal pain	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S
 Urinary symptoms	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S	M T W T F S S

Other symptoms
(e.g. changes in bowel habits, fatigue, unplanned weight loss or unusual bleeding from the vagina)

Thank you

Thank you for your time and commitment to raising
ovarian cancer awareness in your community.

Together, we can improve early detection and patient
outcomes.



Thank you

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