



**Client:** University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust Yellow News  
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# Cancer patients in first £2.3m fitness study

**Maria Zaccaro**



HAMPSHIRE cancer patients are to benefit from a pioneering new exercise programme – the first of its kind in the country.

Pre-surgery exercise sessions for those suffering with cancer are to be piloted at gyms and cancer support centres across the region.

The programme was developed by a team of experts at University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust and will be trialled as part of NHS England's £200 million strategy for transforming cancer outcomes and survival.

Southampton experts found that by training on a bike three times a week, patients' fitness returned to pre-treatment levels or improved within six weeks, while it remained at post-treatment levels or dropped further in those who didn't exercise.

They followed patients for a year after their operations and found a reduction in

length of hospital stay, readmission rates and cardiorespiratory complications.

Now in partnership with the

Wessex Cancer Alliance, Wessex Cancer Trust and council and community gyms, they have been awarded £2.3 million.

The money will be used to look at whether or not the exercise sessions, along with psychological wellbeing support, can be taken out of hospital and delivered to more patients across the south.

Mike Grocott, professor of anaesthesia and critical care at the University of Southampton, worked on the pioneering scheme.

He said: "We know that patients who are physically fitter recover better from surgery across a range of outcomes, so it is now important we try to increase access to some of the pioneering practices we have developed in Southampton."

Dr Sandy Jack, an associate professor in clinical exercise science at the University of Southampton and study lead, said: "We will be using new measures to understand outcomes and this will be a unique partnership between the NHS, charities and the leisure industry to improve patient care.

"In addition to that, it will be the first time such a study has formed part of NHS sustainability and transforma-

tion plans – so it really will be a new way of advancing care and access to it."

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**Prof Mike Grocott**



# UK Additional Regionals

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