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## 'Four in 10' face ordeal of cancer

PA

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Rising cancer rates mean that more than four in 10 Britons will be diagnosed with the disease at some point in their lives, according to a study by a leading health charity.

New figures obtained by Macmillan Cancer Support show that 42% of Britons who die have had cancer - compared to around 35% a decade ago.

The study, which analysed data from 2008, also revealed that 64% of cancer sufferers will eventually die from the disease.

Ciaran Devane, chief executive of Macmillan Cancer Support, said: "It is really alarming that the number of people who will get cancer is now well past one in three, and that there are so many more people with cancer today than even 10 years ago."

According to Macmillan, the number of people living with cancer has risen from 1.5 million in 1998 to two million in 2008 - an increase of 35%.

Experts believe this is because more people are getting the disease and as treatment improves, sufferers survive longer.

There are currently two million in the UK who have had a cancer diagnosis, according to the charity.

However, this is expected to double within the next two decades.

Mr Devane said the NHS were facing a challenge because of the rising rates.

"The NHS really needs to recognise cancer's long term impact on people's lives, to plan better services and to develop more personalised care," he added.

"We have a massive challenge ahead if we are to keep up with the relentless toll cancer takes on people's health, and the NHS must rise to it."

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