

CoppaFeel!, Ansar Projects and Orchid join forces to create accessible resources for people with a learning disability

The organisations have collaborated to create resources to help individuals with a learning disability get to know what's normal for their bodies.



18th October 2022 – Today, CoppaFeel!, UK based breast cancer awareness charity has joined forces with Ansar Projects, a not for profit organisation supporting young adults with a learning disability, and Orchid, the male cancer awareness and support charity, to create accessible breast and testicular cancer resources for people with a learning disability.

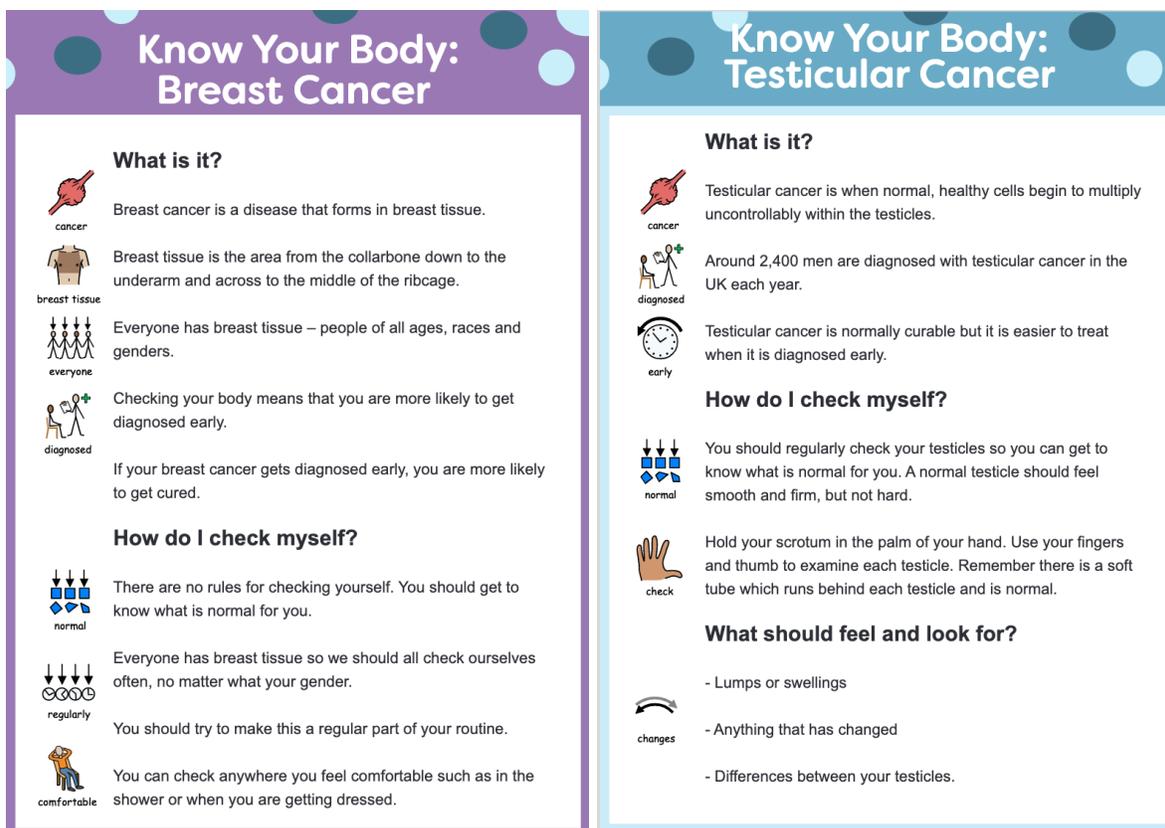
CoppaFeel! exists to help everyone stand the best possible chance of surviving breast cancer, with the goal of ensuring all breast cancers are diagnosed at the earliest stage possible. By empowering young people to check regularly, CoppaFeel! is helping them to spot any unusual changes early and seek medical help at an early stage, because when breast cancer is detected early, treatments are more effective and survival rates are higher.

Breast cancer can affect anybody, no matter your age, gender, disability or background so it's really important for everyone to get to know what's normal for their body. Whilst everyone is different, CoppaFeel!'s message is the same for all people - and the organisations hope that these new resources will help address some of the specific barriers faced by people with a learning disability.

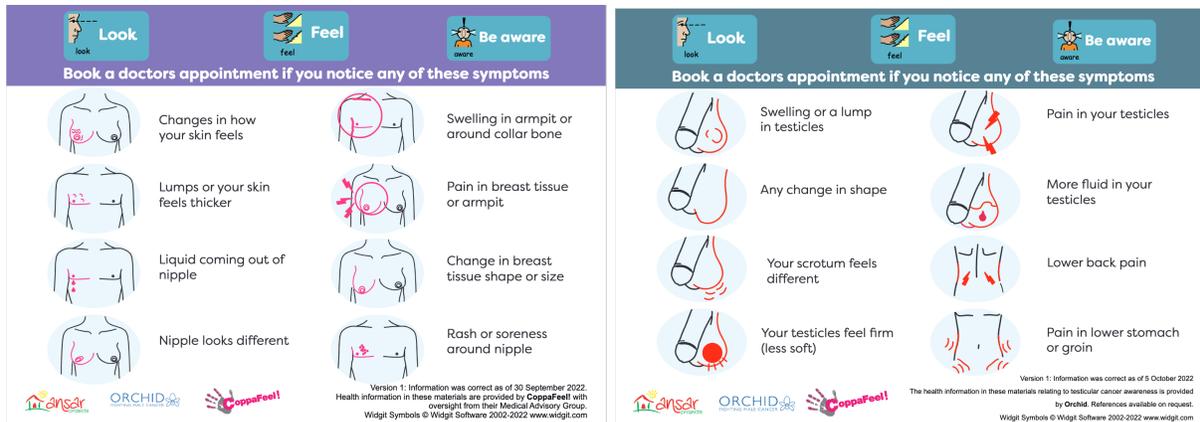
Whilst the information about the number of people with a learning disability in the UK is limited, we are aware that their risk of experiencing cancer in their lifetime is the same as neurotypical individuals. According to the London King's College LeDeR 2021 report, 49% of all deaths in people with a learning disability were deemed to be 'avoidable', with 8% of these deaths caused by cancer¹. Ansar Projects, CoppaFeel! and Orchid have partnered to use their collective experience to plug an information gap that can help people know their bodies and seek medical advice when they notice changes at an earlier stage.

Helen Farrant, Director of Education and Health Communications at CoppaFeel! said “The limited research into inequalities in cancer prevention, diagnostics and outcomes for people with a learning disability is evidence in itself of the health inequalities that exist for this community. We know that breast cancer awareness is important for all people, and therefore it’s vital that there are accessible resources available to everyone. CoppaFeel! feels proud to be collaborating with Ansar Projects and Orchid to help this community learn about their bodies and feel empowered to seek medical guidance should they notice a change”.

The resources are the first of their kind and include accessible breast and testicular cancer information packs, self-checking cards, breast and testicular cancer symptom guides, self-checking social stories and information on what to expect if you notice a change. All the resources are designed with support from disability, diversity and accessibility specialists to ensure all people are able to learn how to effectively check their bodies and get to know their normal.



Christine Harvey, Lead Director for Ansar Projects, said: “We are very proud to have developed these tools in collaboration with CoppaFeel! and Orchid, which we hope will be of benefit to people with a learning disability, their families and support staff. The idea behind them was to support and develop conversations that would help people feel comfortable getting to know their bodies. By supporting people with a learning disability to know their own bodies better, the resources will help early detection of any change. Our hope is that these tools will be used in a variety of settings and be an aid to anyone with a learning disability, their families or support staff in raising awareness of the importance of checking yourself regularly and to empower people in getting to know their bodies.”



Rob Cornes, Male Cancer Information Nurse Specialist at Orchid, said: “These set of resources provide an informative approach to cancer awareness which can fit into the routine of people’s everyday lives improving their confidence in discussing and managing their health.”

The resources are available online via the Ansar Projects website and provide guidance for both individuals with learning disability, and their parents or carers. The resources have elements that are interactive to help with apprehension as well as clear and realistic imagery to assist individuals in completing a self-check. The resources were created over a period of 24months, involving numerous focus groups and close work between CoppaFeel!, Ansar Projects and Orchid, to ensure the information about checking and awareness was presented in an accurate and inclusive way.

To explore the resources online, please head to <https://www.thera.co.uk/about/projects/know-your-body>

¹ London King’s College LeDeR 2021 (<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/leder>)

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About CoppaFeel!

As the UK's first and only breast cancer charity for young people, CoppaFeel! is on a mission to ensure that all breast cancers are diagnosed as early as possible. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK and yet a quarter of young people aren’t aware they could be affected. From delivering nearly 400 school talks to sending over one million free text reminders every year, the charity aims to educate, encourage and empower young people to get to know their bodies and check regularly. And it really works. Users of the charity's Self-Checkout web app are 78% more likely to check afterwards and 60% of those who check themselves regularly feel confident in noticing a change. Why not have a look (and feel) yourself? Visit coppafeel.org

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About Ansar Projects

Ansar Projects supports young people with a learning disability in Greater Manchester to live independently in their own home and in their local community. Ansar Projects is part of the Thera Group,

a group of 16 charities and not for profits that provide local care and support and a range of specialist services for people with a learning disability, including financial advocacy, housing, circles of support, employment, and training.

About Orchid

Orchid is the UK's leading charity working on behalf of anyone affected by prostate, testicular and penile cancer. Orchid was established 26 years ago to help save lives through a range of support services, education and awareness campaigns and pioneering research programmes. In the UK every year over 55,000 men are diagnosed with prostate, testicular or penile cancer. Of these men over **52,000** will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, over **2,300** will be diagnosed with testicular cancer and **700** will be diagnosed with the rare penile cancer. Sadly, these numbers are increasing.