

An Introduction to the multi-disciplinary team for Upper Gastro-Intestinal Cancers

Information and Support for Patients and their families

We would like to introduce you to the multi-disciplinary team for Upper Gastro Intestinal cancer, (these are cancers which affect the oesophagus or stomach) at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust - (Conquest Hospital and Eastbourne District General Hospital).

Who will be involved in my care?

You will be cared for by a Multidisciplinary team consisting of doctors and nurses who all have specialist training and experience in the diagnosis, care and treatment of patients with upper gastro intestinal cancers.

We have listed some of the people in the team caring for you:

- Specialist Gastro - Intestinal Cancer Surgeons
- Specialist Oncologists (Cancer Doctors), trained to prescribe therapies such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy
- Gastroenterologists, trained in the medical management of diseases affecting the oesophagus and stomach
- Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialists (Key Workers)
- Radiologists, who will have special expertise interpreting scans in relation to Upper gastro Intestinal cancers
- Histopathologist, a specialist Doctor who analyses tissue under the microscope
- On Treatment Radiographer, who monitors and supports patients having radiotherapy treatment
- Chemotherapy team including specialist nurses who give medication such as chemotherapy
- Patient Pathway coordinator, who ensures the patients care pathway, is smooth and timely
- Dietitian, who provide expert knowledge for patients with swallowing issues related to their cancer.

What if I need support or information?

People experience a wide range of emotional responses when the possibility of cancer is mentioned, and even more so if the diagnosis is confirmed.

It might be a frightening and unsettling time for patients and their relatives. Whatever you are feeling at present, it may help to talk to someone who has the time to listen and to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to contact the Macmillan Team; you can make a hospital appointment with us if that would be helpful.

Often your case will be referred to another specialist centre, such as The Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton or Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth.

The Specialist Nurse will be happy to see you alone or with your partner, family or friend - whichever you prefer. You can ask us about your diagnosis and disease, as well as your treatment plan and what it will involve.

We can explain the treatment options and make sure you know about the different kinds of help available to you each step of the way.

If we can't answer all your questions, we will try to put you in touch with someone who can.

When your treatment is completed the team will let you know if continued monitoring may be helpful, and if so how this will be arranged.

Investigations and Treatment

Investigations are usually initially carried out at Conquest Hospital and Eastbourne District General Hospital. More specialist ones are done at The Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, Maidstone Hospital, The University of Sussex or The Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath.

Depending on the type of cancer, you may receive one or a combination of treatments. These can include surgery, radiotherapy (strong X-rays), chemotherapy (drug treatment) or a treatment/procedure that will help with symptoms.

If you need radiotherapy or chemotherapy your treatment will be either at Conquest Hospital or at Eastbourne District General Hospital. This treatment is usually given as an outpatient.

An assessment before your operation is usually done at the Princess Royal Hospital and surgery is usually done at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton and you would be cared for by the staff on Level 9A in the Millennium Wing.

Occasionally, you may need a referral to another hospital for a particularly highly specialised treatment. If this is the case the team looking after you will explain and go through this with you.

What information will I be offered?

You can request a written summary of each consultation or copy of the letter we send to your GP.

Your Clinical Nurse Specialist will also offer you a range of information during your care.

How does the Team work?

The MDT works closely together to plan and deliver the most effective treatment and care for each individual patient. This is done in consultation with you and your family, and occurs at each stage of the treatment pathway.

If there is anything about your care and treatment that you do not understand please don't be afraid to ask, we are all here to help.

The Multidisciplinary Team (Eastbourne and Hastings) meet on a weekly basis (Friday 0845-0945hrs) to discuss individual patients' treatment and care. We call this meeting the Multidisciplinary Meeting or MDM meeting.

Research and Trials

These are research studies, which compare new or different treatment with existing ones. If you are eligible for any of these studies this will be discussed by the Multi-Disciplinary Team and you will be informed at your next appointment or by your clinical nurse specialist.

Tell me more about the Clinical Nurse Specialists (Macmillan CNS's)

Clinical Nurse Specialists (Macmillan CNS's) are registered nurses with specialist education and training in cancer care, working alongside the multi-disciplinary Upper gastro-intestinal cancer team both on the wards and in the outpatient department.

The CNS will have a key role in coordinating your care with different members of the multi-disciplinary team trying to ensure you have the guidance and support you require. You will normally meet them at the time of your diagnosis.

We offer expert advice on treatment options, and give psychological support to you and those close to you. This is throughout your illness, alongside helping people with a possible or confirmed diagnosis of cancer to cope with the particular difficulties it may bring.

Unfortunately the Macmillan nursing Team does not provide a 24 hour service so if you have an urgent enquiry and they are not available you can leave a voice message on their answerphone (will be responded to on the next working day), contact your GP, the 111 service or the Community Nurse if you are known to them.

Patients on chemotherapy treatment will be provided with additional emergency contact numbers.

Where else can I get help or information?

Oncology Secretaries	0300 131 4500 Extension 148391
Gastroenterology secretaries	0300 131 4500 Extension 148192, 148902, 148193
Macmillan Dietician	Katherine Howells 0300 131 4500 Ext 134172 Mobile: 07811811721
Radiotherapy Reception	01273 696955 Ext 4901
Chemotherapy unit	Judy Beard Unit - 0300 131 4500 Ext: 147037 Pevensey Day Unit - 0300 131 4500 Ext: 135867
Local Macmillan Benefits Team	01323 635989
Eastbourne Clinical Nurse Specialists	07971720418
Hastings Clinical Nurse Specialists	07812657703
Macmillan Cancer Line	0808 808 0000
Benefits Enquiry Line	0800 882200
Macmillan Benefits helpline	0800 500 800
Oesophageal Patients Association	07715011323

Useful Websites

www.macmillan.org.uk

www.mycancertreatment.org

www.nhschoices

www.sussexcancer.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk/ips

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: 0300 131 4500 Ext: 135860 or by email: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: 0300 131 4500 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Beverly Etherington CNS, Joyce Irving CNS, Anita Ivimy CNS, Dr Angus Robinson - Clinical Oncologist

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
Upper Gastro Intestinal MDM Team

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Responsible clinician/author: Beverly Etherington CNS

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