

Supportive and Palliative Care Team

What is Supportive and Palliative Care?

Supportive and Palliative Care aims to improve the quality of life of patients and those closest to them, facing problems associated with advanced or life-threatening illness (this includes cancer and other non-cancer conditions).

It includes the management of physical symptoms, social, psychological and spiritual concerns.

Who provides Supportive and Palliative Care?

All health professionals can provide Supportive and Palliative Care to patients and those closest to them. In some situations however it can be helpful to have more specialist support and a referral to our team may be made.

Who are we?

The team consists of:

Macmillan Supportive and Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS), Clinical Support Workers and Consultants in Palliative Medicine. At times we also have other Medical Doctors working with the team to gain experience in Palliative Medicine.

Although the CNS's are Macmillan nurses, the Supportive and Palliative Care Team will support any patient with symptoms from a life limiting illness. We also aim to support all patients identified as dying within the hospital.

What do we do?

We provide an advisory service to adult patients within the two acute hospitals, Conquest and Eastbourne District General.

Our team does not take over responsibility for your care but works in partnership with the other health professionals looking after you. You may need to be seen on one occasion or if needed we will provide more frequent visits to assess and provide support to you, those closest to you and the staff caring for you. We will assess your individual needs and work with medical teams to improve your symptoms and quality of life.

We can help with:

- Advice on managing pain or other physical symptoms such as nausea, breathlessness, constipation etc.
- Providing psychological, emotional and spiritual support for you and those closest to you.
- Offering advice and support with regards to social and financial issues.
- Supporting and advising on complex discharge planning and ensuring community services are involved where appropriate.
- Referrals to or liaising with St Michael's Hospice in Hastings and St Wilfrid's Hospice in Eastbourne or your local hospice service, to ensure continuity of care after discharge.
- Assist in making plans for a future time when your health may deteriorate to ensure your wishes are known and supported where possible.

- Support you and those closest to you during the last days of life and try to ensure you are cared for in the place of your choice with your individual needs met.

You may be referred to the Palliative Care Outpatients Clinic. This will involve an appointment with a Consultant in Palliative Medicine or another member of the team. The appointment may include advice and support regarding physical symptoms or other identified issues.

Use of medications

Sometimes the medications we use to manage symptoms are used “off label” or “beyond licence”. This means they are used at a different dose, given by a different method or for a different reason to that which they were given a marketing licence for. For example, morphine is a pain relief medicine and has a licence to be used for this purpose. It has also been found to be helpful in managing breathlessness which it does not have a licence. This way of using medicines is deemed safe since there is evidence of their effectiveness and they may have been used in these other ways by health professionals for a long period of time. If you have any questions or concerns about this then please ask a member of the team.

Who can make a referral to our team?

Any health care professional in the hospital or the community can make a referral to our team. We also welcome referrals from patients and those closest to them, themselves, as long as the medical team caring for the patient are in agreement.

Each referral will be triaged and seen in order of priority according to need as soon as possible after it is received, most patients are seen within 1 -2 working days.

How to contact us

We are available 8.00am until 4 pm seven days a week.
Please contact us to discuss any concerns or questions you may have about your care.

We can be contacted by telephone on:

Eastbourne 03001315899
Conquest 07788415014

If we are unable to answer your call immediately then please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

At weekends and Bank Holidays we have a reduced service with only one Clinical Nurse Specialist working at each hospital site so we may take a little longer to return your call.

We can also be contacted by email: esht.palliativecare@nhs.net

Sources of information

St Michaels Hospice - <http://www.stmichaelshospice.org/>

St Wilfrid's Hospice - <https://www.stwhospice.org/>

Macmillan Cancer Support - <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/>

British Heart Foundation - <https://www.bhf.org.uk/>

British Lung Foundation - <https://www.blf.org.uk/>

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 4731 (direct dial) or by email at: 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 4434 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

Jayne Winter Supportive and Palliative Care Team - Team Lead.

Helen McDonald Supportive and Palliative Care Team – Clinical Nurse Specialist

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Responsible clinician/author: Jayne Winter Lead Nurse Supportive and Palliative Care Team

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