

FOI REF: 26/283

18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

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Further to your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, I now set out our answers to your specific questions, and any clarifications sought and provided, as follows:

**For the purposes of this request:**

- **“After treatment” refers to the period within 12 months following the completion of primary cancer treatment.**
- **“Mental health or psychological support” includes services provided directly by the Trust or via commissioned partners (e.g. NHS Talking Therapies/IAPT, psycho-oncology services, counselling, or support groups).**
- **Please include all adult (18+) cancer patients under the care of the Trust.**
- **Unless otherwise stated, all questions refer to the 12-month period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.**
- **If data is not available for this exact period, please provide the closest available 12-month period and specify the dates.**

**1) Provision of support:**

**Does your Trust provide any dedicated mental health or psychological support specifically for adult cancer patients after the completion of primary treatment?**

**a) Please answer yes or no.**

**Yes.**

**b) If no, please confirm whether patients are routinely referred to external services.**

**Not applicable.**

**2) Nature of support:**

**If yes, please provide a brief description of the types of support available (e.g. counselling, psychological therapy, support groups, referral pathways)**

- Individual counselling offered within East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) to the cancer patient and family members.
- Relationship/couple counselling offered to partners, or other family members' e.g. siblings, parents/adult children.
- Options for cancer specific groups within ESHT.
- Options of support to access a variety of cancer specific groups and services locally or nationally.
- Options for support to access some non-cancer specific groups and organisations e.g. for bereavement.

Referrals via any member of ESHT staff by completing online referral or via any other professional organisation by completing online referral form or self-referral by phoning or emailing the Macmillan Information and Support Manager or the Macmillan counselling Service within ESHT.

**3) Duration of support:**

**Please indicate whether support is:**

**a) Time limited (please specify typical duration).**

Typically, 10 counselling sessions per referral, unlimited re-referrals as long as the referral criteria is met

**b) Ongoing/needs-based.**

While our baseline is as outlined above, we adopt a personalised care approach and seek to provide additional support where requested, subject to assessment outcomes and service capacity.

**c) Not formally defined**

Not applicable.

**4) Aftercare pathways:**

**Does your Trust have a formal survivorship or aftercare pathway for cancer patients that includes mental health or psychological support?**

**a) Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**b) If yes, please provide a brief description.**

As outlined in questions 3a and 3b, our counselling service does not restrict the number of re-referrals for cancer patients, nor impose time limits based on months or years following cancer treatment. Patients can continue to access cancer related support post treatment using the standard referral pathway to the Macmillan Information and Support Manager or the Macmillan Counselling Service.

In addition, ESHT offers the 'HOPE' course and 'Moving Forward', to support patients following cancer treatment as well as a catalogue of referrals to third sector support groups and activities which are referred to following a Holistic Needs assessment.

**5) Referrals to mental health services:**

**Please provide the total number of adult cancer patients referred to mental health or psychological services in the period specified.**

- **If exact figures are not available, please provide the closest available proxy measure (e.g. referrals to psycho-oncology services, NHS Talking Therapies referrals from oncology, or equivalent)**

398 patients referred specifically to the Macmillan counselling service in the period specified.

**6) (If available) Timing of referrals:**

**If recorded, please provide a breakdown of these referrals by:**

**a) Patients undergoing active treatment.**

Specifically, to Macmillan counselling service x 311

**b) Patients who have completed primary treatment.**

Specifically, to Macmillan counselling service x 49

The above figures will change daily as some referrals within this time period are still active within the service

I trust this information is helpful in its detail or explanation however, if you are dissatisfied with the response, then you have the right to request an internal review. If you wish to seek an internal review, please write to the Freedom of Information Team at [esh-tr.foi@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.foi@nhs.net) quoting the above FOI reference number, within 40 working days. Please note the Trust is not obliged to accept a request for an internal review after this time period.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information (FOI) Team  
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust  
0300 131 4716  
Core Hours of Business: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm