

*The* ROYAL MARSDEN

NHS Foundation Trust

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# Paediatric Clinical Nurse Specialists

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**Childrens Unit**

**Patient Information**



**NHS**

## Introduction

This leaflet explains the role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist. They may also be known as your Key worker or CNS.

Clinical Nurse Specialists are trained cancer nurses. Their role is to offer emotional support, information, and practical advice from the time of diagnosis, throughout the course of treatment and afterwards. You will usually meet a CNS when you are told of your child's diagnosis or during their first consultation at The Royal Marsden. Your CNS or Key worker will then meet you and your child during your first visits for treatment.

## At diagnosis

Being told your child has cancer can be difficult. You may get home and be unsure about or forget what exactly was said. You may also read some of the literature given to you and find you have more questions. In fact, many people say that they think of further questions in between hospital appointments. Some people may also want more time to talk through issues or discuss their child's individual treatment options.

The CNS team is available via telephone, email or face-to-face by appointment, if you need extra time, to provide information and support.

As well as dealing with your own reaction to your child's diagnosis, it can be very difficult breaking the news to family members and friends, especially children and their siblings. Your CNS can help with what to say and when. With your permission, we can also provide information directly to family members.

## During treatment and afterwards

As time goes on, your CNS can give you information about the different types of treatments and their side effects that are currently available at The Royal Marsden. As treatment proceeds, a CNS may not always be in clinic with you, but they can be contacted by clinic staff.

For some people, periods of anxiety, sadness or difficulty in adjusting can arise during and especially after treatment.

Symptoms can vary from emotional and relationship issues to lifestyle concerns.

Your CNS can offer continuity and support and can refer your child to other healthcare professionals including the physiotherapist, occupational therapist, Young Lives vs Cancer social workers, dietitian and community nursing and support services.

Your CNS will continue to be available to you and your child while you are being followed up at The Royal Marsden. You are welcome to contact us about any aspect of your child's cancer, treatment or recovery.

## Contact details

Your CNS will be happy to provide you with a contact card, listing their telephone number and the hours which you can call.

Alternatively, please call:

**Paediatric 24 hour advice line** 020 8915 6248

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Telephone: Chelsea 020 7811 8438 / 020 7808 2083

Sutton 020 8661 3759 / 3951

Email: [patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk)

No conflicts of interest were declared in the production of this leaflet.

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

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[royalmarsden.org](http://royalmarsden.org)

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