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# The Symptom Control and Palliative Care Service

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## **Patient Information**





## **What is Palliative Care?**

The aim of palliative care is to achieve the best quality of life for patients and their families. This can involve controlling pain and other symptoms, for example nausea, vomiting, constipation and breathlessness, as well as providing emotional and practical support.

## **The Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team**

The Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team provides a service for all patients throughout the Trust, including both inpatient and outpatients.

The Hospital Symptom Control and Palliative Care service is available for inpatients who may have more complex needs regardless of treatment pathways.

The Integrated Symptom Control and Palliative Care service is available to patients in some outpatient clinics and medical day unit treatment clinics. This service offers support alongside active cancer treatment, minimising the side effects of treatment, and improving quality of life.

The Hospital to Home (H2H) service supports patients when making decisions to stop treatment and helps transition to the best supportive care in the community.

## **Referrals to the Symptom Control and Palliative Care Service**

Referrals to the team can be made by any member of your medical or nursing team as well as any member of the multi-disciplinary team. Your medical care may either be shared with your existing consultant or led by the Consultant in Palliative Medicine. Most patients are referred whilst staying in hospital but patients are also seen in the Outpatient Departments, Day Units, Clinical Assessment Unit and Critical Care Unit.

Referrals to the Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team may be made for support and advice in addressing:

- Physical problems, such as pain and other symptoms
- Emotional support
- Ensuring co-ordination of care between the hospital and community palliative care services
- Urgent Care Plan/Advance Care Planning – creating a personalised future care plan, discussing and recording healthcare wishes.

## **Who are the members of our team?**

The Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team includes specialist nurses and doctors who have training in symptom management and palliative care. They work closely with the oncology team managing your treatment.

## **The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)**

The MDT consists of doctors and nurses who are specialists in palliative care and the extended palliative care team, which includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dietitians and pastoral care services. The MDT meets weekly to discuss patients being seen by the hospital support team.

## **Key worker**

A member of the Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team will be your main contact for you and your family throughout your care.

## **Questionnaire**

Our team will carry out a detailed assessment of your needs using IPOS (Integrated Palliative Outcome Scale). This gives us a picture of your general health, your symptoms and your feelings, so that you get the best quality care from the services that you may need. This is a simple questionnaire which should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

## Audit and research

An active audit and research programme aims to ensure evidence-based practice is carried out at all times. You may be asked to participate in a research study, but will be under no obligation to do so. If you do take part you will be free to withdraw at any time without giving reason and without your care or treatment being affected.

## Coordinate My Care – Urgent Care Record

You will be invited to start creating a care plan, Coordinate My Care (CMC) if you live in the greater London area. This is an electronic care plan which shares information about you and how you want be cared for in an emergency. You can create a personalised care plan with your doctor or nurse and the CMC team will share your plan with the professionals caring for you, when needed. Information and patient videos can be accessed via the following link:

*[www.coordinatemycare.co.uk](http://www.coordinatemycare.co.uk)*

## Contact details

The Symptom Control and Palliative Care Team can be contacted Monday to Friday, 9am–5pm.

**Sutton** 020 8642 6011

**Chelsea** 020 7352 8171

## Your Palliative Care Specialist is:

Name: .....

Extension: .....

The team's normal working hours are 9am–5pm, Monday to Friday. If you have difficulty contacting the team within these hours, please contact the Palliative Care PA who will assist you:

**Symptom Control & Palliative Care PA, Sutton** 020 8661 3182

**Symptom Control & Palliative Care PA, Chelsea** 020 7808 2761

### **The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline: 020 8915 6899**

You can ring the hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call us straight away if you are feeling unwell or are worried about the side effects of cancer treatments.

This service provides specialist advice and support to all Royal Marsden patients, as well as to their carers, and both hospital and community-based doctors and nurses caring for Royal Marsden patients.

### **Patient self help and support groups**

Staff at The Royal Marsden Help Centre will be able to offer additional helpful information regarding patient support services. There is a Help Centre on both sites with a drop-in service; no appointment is necessary.

You can also contact them by telephone or email:

Telephone: 020 7352 8438

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

## Further support

### **Macmillan Cancer Support**

*www.macmillan.org.uk*

Telephone: 0808 808 0000

### **Marie Curie**

*www.mariecurie.org.uk*

Support line: 0800 090 2309

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## References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

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

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

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

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

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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