
Clinical Nurse Specialists

Patient information

CNS Name.....

Contact Number.....

Working Hours.....



Introduction

This leaflet will explain the role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist. They may also be known as your Keyworker or CNS.

Clinical Nurse Specialists are trained cancer nurses. They are experts in a specific type of cancer and have specialist knowledge in that particular area. 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 your diagnosis or during your first consultation at The Royal Marsden. Your CNS or Keyworker will then meet you during your first visits for treatment.

At diagnosis

Being told you have 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 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 diagnosis, it can be very difficult breaking the news to family members and friends, especially children. 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 that are currently available and their side effects. 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.

The CNS can offer continuity and support and can refer you to other healthcare professionals including the physiotherapist, occupational therapist, welfare rights advisor, and community nursing and support services.

Your CNS will continue to be available to you while you are being followed up at The Royal Marsden. Please feel you can telephone us about any aspect of your 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:

The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline:
020 8915 6899

(available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

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

References

This leaflet 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 leaflet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

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