

Accessing Support: Reacting/Adjusting to a Cancer Diagnosis

Receiving a cancer diagnosis is understandably often accompanied by difficult emotions such as stress and anxiety. In these times it is important to practice self-compassion and look after your psychological wellbeing. It is very normal to feel a sense of shock, or to find the uncertainty that can arise difficult to manage. Some people find that understanding their diagnosis by seeking information from reliable sources helps them prepare for treatment, while for others this information can feel overwhelming. Being aware of sources of information and support is important so that you can decide what might be helpful for you. Paying attention to your feelings and worries with kindness and reaching out for support from others all assists with emotional resilience and supports adjustment.



Below is a list of organisations who may be able to offer you some support, as well as some resources that you may find helpful to read/listen to. The range and quality of services/support available from such organisations may vary. This list has been gathered as signposting only, and The Royal Marsden cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided by an organisation listed or the quality of their services.

If you have any questions or would like further advice/guidance about where to seek specialist help in your local area, you can speak with a member of your Royal Marsden treatment team or the Adult Psychological Support Service.

Cancer Research UK "Newly Diagnosed" chat forum

Offers an opportunity to ask questions about treatment or symptoms and gain emotional support from fellow newly diagnosed cancer patients. It is possible to search for past posts made about particular topics or concerns.

Website link: <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/cancer-chat/post-a-discussion/newly-diagnosed>

Macmillan Talking Cancer Podcast – Episode 1 Diagnosis

Discusses a mother's feelings when she first discovered she had leukaemia, plus the common thoughts and concerns individual may face upon receiving a cancer diagnosis.

Website link: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/diagnosis/talking-about-cancer/talking-cancer-podcast>



Macmillan – Just Been Diagnosed?

This website outlines the common thoughts and concerns for those who have recently been diagnosed. It contains many useful links embedded in the text for learning more about cancer type, reducing family/work worries, anticipated lifestyle changes and managing various emotions, fears, and uncertainties.

Website link: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/diagnosis/just-been-diagnosed>

Maggie's – Coping with a new cancer diagnosis

A blog post detailing ten tips to help cope with a new cancer diagnosis.

Website link: <https://www.maggies.org/about-us/blog/coping-with-a-new-cancer-diagnosis/>

The Royal Marsden – Royal Mile prehabilitation programme

The Royal MILE prehabilitation programme is for people who have recently been diagnosed with cancer and are just starting treatment. These videos (and worksheets) aim to support people with their psychological wellbeing. Videos 1-6 are to help people understand their emotions as they are diagnosed and start treatment, while videos 7+ look at specific skills to help manage distress.

Website link: <https://patientinfolibrary.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/royal-mile-prehabilitation-programme>

Cancer Support Community Newly Diagnosed Information Leaflet

Step by step guide on the types of information a patient can gather and conversations they might want to have with their medical team and/or family after receiving a diagnosis.

Website link:

https://www.cancersupportcommunity.org/sites/default/files/d7/document/newly_diagnosed_with_cancer.pdf

Other APSS Information and Resources

The Adult Psychological Support Service has a range of signposting information sheets on topics such as: coping at different stages of the cancer pathway, supporting your physical and emotional wellbeing, relationships, and information specific to certain types of cancer.

You can view the signposting information sheets on The Royal Marsden's [Patient Information Library](#) and the [Adult Psychological Support Service Website](#) (under 'Further information and resources'). You can also request a copy of these by emailing Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk or telephoning **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton).



Additional support services

Cancer Care Map

An online database of cancer support services. You can search by postcode or by particular themes e.g. cancer type.

Website link: <https://www.cancercaremap.org/>

Maggie's Cancer Centres

Cancer care centres with multiple locations, including The Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton and Charing Cross Hospital, West London. Workshops, groups, information and one-to-one counselling available.

Website link: <https://www.maggies.org/>

Phone number: **0300 123 1801**

NHS Talking Therapies

NHS website to help you find your local psychological talking therapies service based on your GP address. Your local NHS talking therapies service can be helpful if you would like psychological support for cancer when you are no longer regularly coming in for appointments at The Royal Marsden, as well as for concerns unrelated to cancer or that predated your cancer and have become worse due to it.

Website link: [Find NHS talking therapies for anxiety and depression - NHS](#)

If you need any specialist and personalised advice about your cancer treatment, symptoms or side effects, please contact The Royal Marsden Hotline. This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on **020 8915 6899**.

The Royal Marsden's Adult Psychological Support Service offers short-term, cancer-specific psychological and psychiatric support. You can either self-refer or ask somebody in your Royal Marsden healthcare team to refer you. For more information, visit [Adult Psychological Support Service | The Royal Marsden](#). Alternatively, contact us directly on **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea), **020 8661 3006** (Sutton), or email Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk.



If you have ideas for other signposting or information sheets, or if you would like to be involved in working with APSS to improve the service we offer, please scan the QR code to see more about our patient and public involvement, or email Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk or telephone **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton) with your ideas.

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