



Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialists



Your Macmillan head and neck clinical nurse specialists (CNS) or key-workers are Addy Katandika, Bincey Joseph and Clare Lancaster.

The Macmillan head and neck specialist team have extensive training and experience in head and neck cancer nursing and management. We specialise in the care and support of head and neck cancer patients throughout their cancer journey and provide quality seamless care to all our patients. We work as key members of the multidisciplinary team (MDT) involved in discussing and planning your treatment and care and we provide expert knowledge in your day to day management.

Our care pledge is to ensure a positive patient experience that aims to meet your expectations by providing excellent quality of care in a timely manner. You will be at the centre of all discussions and planning and we will tailor your care and management according to your individual care needs.

How can we help

We can provide you with:

- An opportunity to talk through the information that you have been given
- An opportunity to explore your worries and concerns and signpost/refer you accordingly
- Support for you, your family and carers
- Assessment of your needs and ensure that you receive the care that is appropriate and ensure that you are involved in decisions about your own care
- Specialised nursing advice

- Pain and symptom control management
- Advice regarding finance, benefits and entitlements
- Lifestyle advice on diet, exercise, smoking and alcohol intake
- Advice regarding support at home and in the community
- Advice on return to work, written information to employers/sick certificates
- Further information and support in finding related information that you might need
- Prescription exemption forms for patients under 60 years of age
- A link with other health care professionals involved in your care
- An opportunity to be involved in Headstart Support Group made up of Head and Neck patients for peer support

Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) can offer:

- Central point of contact via face to face, telephone and e-mail for ongoing advice and support to patients and their families
- Information about investigations, diagnosis, treatment options, side effects and living with and beyond cancer
- Time to discuss concerns, problems, anxieties, investigations, results, treatment options and care plan
- Holistic assessments and appropriate referrals to other health professionals
- Link between hospital and community services and ensure you receive specialist services as needed

- Information about local and national support
- Teaching and Education to patients, families and carers
- Co-ordinate your care e.g. outpatient appointments, MDT, admission, discharge

What happens after a head and neck cancer diagnosis

A diagnosis of a head and neck cancer is a worrying time that raises many different concerns and emotions. This leaflet describes the initial stages of your journey, how treatment decisions are made and the help and support available to you.

You will be introduced to your CNS before or at diagnosis whose role is described in detail above. The CNS will act as a central point of contact during your patient journey and co-ordinate all your care both in acute and outpatient settings.

What is a multidisciplinary team

A multidisciplinary team (MDT) consists of specialist cancer doctors, surgeons, oncologists, radiologists, specialist nurses, pathologists, speech and language therapists and dieticians who are all experienced in the diagnosis, treatment and management of people with head and neck cancer.

What tests/investigations will I need?

Before your treatment option is discussed and confirmed with you at the MDT Clinic, it is necessary for you to have a number of different tests in-order to ensure that the most appropriate treatment is planned. You might have had some of these tests at this point but you might require additional tests to give us a full picture of the location of the cancer, its extent and whether it

has spread or not. These tests take priority.

These may include:

- Biopsies
- Blood tests
- CT (computed tomography) scan
- MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan
- Ultrasound scan
- Fine needle aspiration (FNA)
- PET (positron emission tomography) scan

Where is the multidisciplinary team?

There is an MDT at the Kent Oncology Centre, Maidstone, Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton and Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford. The MDT that will discuss your case will be influenced by where you live (catchment area) that means you will be referred to the MDT nearer your home address. During investigations you might initially be seen by a consultant who does not cover your area therefore you will be transferred to another consultant within the same team who covers your MDT area. This does not delay or compromise your care but it serves to streamline your care within the correct pathway and MDT.

What does a multidisciplinary team do?

The MDT meets weekly to discuss test results and make recommendations for treatment options. Each team member contributes their expert knowledge and by working together with you and your family we aim to provide you with the best treatment, care, management and information for your

individualised needs. The team will provide you with options available to you but the decision is yours.

Your treatment might involve surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, electro-chemotherapy or in some cases a combination of these treatments. In some cases symptom control and supportive management might be the only available option, the team will explore and discuss as appropriate.

Maidstone MDT - Tuesday

Brighton MDT - Wednesday

Guildford MDT - Thursday

When will I be told of the MDT outcome?

You may be offered a clinic appointment on the same day that your case is discussed by the MDT or your consultant will see you in clinic shortly after this date with the recommended treatment option and management. Please feel free to bring a relative or friend with you to this appointment for support and help to remember the discussion outcome and treatment option.

Do I have to accept the treatment offered?

The MDT recommends the best treatment for you but the choice of the treatment you want is yours. Your consent is required before any treatment starts. Your GP would be informed of the MDT decisions and you will still have the opportunity to discuss this decision with your doctor.

If your treatment choice is surgery and it involves reconstruction, additional scans maybe required if not already done. These tests are used for vascular mapping of appropriate

place on your body to harvest tissue and blood supplies for reconstruction.

These may include:

- CTA (computed tomography angiography)
- MRA (magnetic resonance imaging angiography)
- MRI (magnetic resonance imaging)
- Hand held Doppler

Where will I have my treatment?

All head and neck cancer surgery and electro-chemotherapy (ECT), if recommended, will be performed at Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH) in East Grinstead. Therefore, assessments prior to surgery and ECT including anaesthetic review are performed at QVH. If you are undergoing a major surgery involving reconstruction you will be invited to the multi-professional clinic. This clinic is led by speech and language therapists, dietician and clinical nurse specialists for a thorough pre-assessment to equip you with information and skills essential to get you through your recovery period. If your treatment choice is radiotherapy and chemotherapy these treatments are provided at the centre where your MDT team is based. If your treatment recommendation is for supportive and symptom control, you will be referred to supportive services in your local area for easy and timely access. These are often linked to your local hospice care services.

Our commitment to you

We will respect your privacy and dignity and will be sensitive to, and respect your religious, spiritual and cultural needs at all times. We aim to deliver seamless and high standard of quality care and would welcome any comments or suggestions regarding the service you have received and your patient experience.

Our team is based at QVH a short distance from the Macmillan information centre. We work Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm but not on weekends or bank holidays. We can be contacted by e-mail, telephone or face-to-face. We are frequently away reviewing patients on the wards, clinic or attending MDT therefore in our absence if you contact us by telephone please leave a voice message and we will aim to return your call as soon as we are back in the office. Likewise e-mails are checked on a daily basis and responded to accordingly. To ensure that we have the correct patient, please leave your name in full, date of birth, hospital number or NHS number and a brief message so that we can deal with your concerns.

At QVH we have an on-site Macmillan cancer information and support centre with trained staff and volunteers at hand to offer emotional support and information to you and your family. The centre also offers a range of complimentary therapies including reflexology (1hr session) and acupuncture (45mins session). Feel free to call and book yourself a session. Please do not hesitate to contact us about anything that is worrying you.

Contact us

Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialists

Tel: 01342 414493 / 01342 414076

E-mail: QVH.headneckcns@nhs.net

QVH Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre

On-site information centre

Open Monday –Friday 10am -4pm

Walk in, call or e-mail us

Tel: 01342 414369

E-mail: cancer.information@qvh.nhs.uk

Further information

The following sources of information and support are also available:

Macmillan Cancer Support

A UK wide charity whose aim is to support people diagnosed with cancer

Information/support line Tel: 0808 808 0000

Website: www.macmillan.org.uk

Kent Oncology Macmillan Information Centre

Maidstone Hospital

Tel: 01622 227064

www.kentonologycentre.co.uk

Stop Smoking Service

NHS smoking helpline

Tel: 0800 022 4332

www.nhs.uk/smokefree

Headstart

Our regional head and neck cancer support group for patients and carers

Contact Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialists for details

For general hospital information

Please visit our website: www.qvh.nhs.uk

If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH, please visit www.supportqvh.org



Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or an alternative format.

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