Skin Cancer Service Hand Held Diary

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio tape or computer disk, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

Introduction

This information booklet is designed to provide you and your family with information about the skin cancer service at Litchdon House, which is part of the dermatology department for North Devon District Hospital.

This is also your treatment diary. As well as this booklet, you will be given a variety of information leaflets that will be relevant to you and your diagnosis by your specialist nurse.

There are blank pages at the back of this booklet for you to write down any questions you have. A member of the skin cancer team will be happy to answer them either at your clinic appointment or over the telephone.

There is space at the back of this booklet for any member of the skin cancer team to write down comments or changes to your treatment so you have an up-to-date record of your planned care.

(We would appreciate any comments you have regarding this information booklet and how beneficial it has been for you.)
Your personal details

Hospital number: ………………………………………………………………………………………

Name: …………………………………………………………………………………………………

Date of birth: ………………………………………………………………………………………

Address: …………………………………………………………………………………………….

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Telephone number: Home: ……………………………………………………………

Work: …………………………………………………………

Mobile: ………………………………………………………..

Your GP’s name:

Address: ……………………………………………………………………………………………..

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Telephone number: ………………………………………………………

Your consultant/associated specialist is:

………………………………………………………………………………

Based at Dermatology, Litchdon House, Landkey Road, Barnstaple
Your skin cancer team

Dermatologists

Doctors who specialise in skin conditions. They may remove your skin cancer surgically or by using non-surgical methods. They may transfer your care to the plastic surgeons.

Plastic surgeon

They may surgically remove your skin cancer and perform any other surgery you may require. They have a clinic at North Devon District Hospital on Tuesdays.

Oncologists

Doctors who specialise in treating cancer. They may be involved in your care should you need any additional treatment such as chemotherapy or radiotherapy. They have a clinic at North Devon District Hospital.

Skin cancer nurse specialist (CNS)

They will be able to provide you with information and explanations about all aspects of your condition and any treatments you may require.

Skin cancer nursing service

The skin cancer nursing service aims to provide practical help, psychological and social support for patients with skin cancer.

What is a skin cancer nurse specialist?

- They are qualified nurses who have specialised in skin cancer and work within the skin cancer team.
- They will normally see you at your first outpatient appointment where you will have been given your diagnosis. You will have regular contact with them throughout your treatment and follow up care.
- They can provide you with explanations regarding all aspects of your disease and your treatment options, and they coordinate your investigations, treatment and follow up care to ensure your "plan of care" runs smoothly without any unnecessary delays.
- They can advise you on how to look after yourself in the sun and how to check yourself for signs of further problems.
- They will provide continuing support for you and your family throughout your treatment, and they are happy for you to contact them to discuss anything you feel is important.
- They can provide you with useful contact numbers as well as names of support groups if you wish to use them.
Your skin cancer CNS is based at Litchdon House and available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, 8.30am to 5pm.

You can contact her by telephone on 01271 312850.

The skin cancer multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting

What is the multi-disciplinary team?

The MDT is a team of doctors and nurses with specialist training and experience in the diagnosis and management of skin cancer.

Members of the Skin Cancer MDT

- Consultant dermatologist
- Consultant plastic and reconstructive surgeon
- GPs with specialist interest in dermatology
- Consultant histopathologist (specialist – examines samples of body tissues for diagnosis)
- Clinical nurse specialist
- MDT coordinator
- Dermatology manager
- Consultant clinical oncologist

MDT meetings

The MDT meets weekly to review and discuss treatment plans for patients with a diagnosis of skin cancer. Following clinical guidelines, the team will decide the most appropriate treatment plan for individual patients. This may include further tests or surgery, or referral to other specialties.

You are entitled to, and will be offered a written outcome of this meeting, known as your treatment plan after you have been seen for your diagnosis. This will be in the form of a letter to your GP, and a written copy will be sent to you.

A patient’s treatment plan may be discussed more than once by the MDT, and at any point in their skin cancer pathway, for example: following a biopsy, following surgery, following a scan, or if new symptoms develop. You will be kept informed each time.

Access to the Skin Cancer MDT

If you need to discuss your treatment plan or any other aspect of your care, please contact your specialist nurse, also known as your keyworker.
Your specialist nurse will help coordinate your care from diagnosis to treatment to follow up care. Your specialist nurse will also provide information about investigations and treatment options and a link to other professionals and support services.

Cancer and benefits

Coping with financial problems, whether on a permanent or temporary basis, can cause further anxiety and stress. Living on a low income can be particularly difficult for families with young children, single parents or people living alone. Many people don’t claim benefits because they are simply not aware of what they are entitled to, or they feel too embarrassed to ask for help. If you feel confused by the benefits system, remember that help is there if you need it, so don’t be put off. You can talk to your skin cancer nurse specialist or someone at your GP practice.

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is also a good place to go for guidance or you can ask your local Benefits Agency (BA) office for help.

Helpful organisations

Some contacts that you may find useful:

**Macmillan**: A range of support services are provided by Macmillan Cancer Support:

- **Macmillan Support Line**: 0808 808 00 00 Monday – Friday, 9am – 8pm. This provides information, emotional support and benefits advice. It is free to call from all landlines and most mobile networks.

- **Macmillan/Citizens Advice Bureau**: 0845 8949567 (local rate) Monday – Friday, 9am – 4.30pm. For people living in North Cornwall, North and West Devon to the border with Somerset. This is a specialist welfare and benefits advice service for anyone diagnosed with cancer and their carers. The service is free for all. A home visiting service is available if you cannot attend one of the ten bureau centres. They provide information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans.

- **Macmillan Information Centre**: 01271 349107. Based at North Devon District Hospital in the main foyer on level 2. Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 4.40pm. Drop in for a range of information leaflets. If you can’t find what you need, please ask a member of staff.

- **Macmillan Online Community**: www.macmillan.org.uk/community. This is an online support group where you can chat to other people who may be in a similar situation to yourself.

- **Macmillan website**: www.macmillan.org.uk. A wide range of information about all aspects of cancer, its treatment and how to manage the way it impacts upon your life.

**Melanoma UK**: 0808 171 2455. Website: www.melanomauk.org.uk. A national support and advocacy group.
North Devon Hospice: North Devon Hospice provides care and support to local people affected by cancer and other life-limiting illnesses. To be able to access their facilities you will need to be referred by your GP or any other healthcare professional. Please talk to your GP or CNS for more information.


Devon Community Directory: www.directory.devon.gov.uk. If you want to find the nearest support group, charity service or outreach service, the Devon Community Directory is a one-stop information shop offering access to thousands of services, community groups and information across Devon in a single online search.

Force Cancer Support and Information Service (Exeter): 01392 402086. For those attending hospital in Exeter the charity offers support, information and complementary therapies.

British Association of Dermatologists: www.bad.org.uk. A charity that provides information about skin diseases, including skin cancer. It also provides general information about the skin and current issues in skin disease.

Your questions
## Treatment diary

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Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

‘Care Opinion’ comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.