Holistic Needs Assessment and Care Plan

Information for patients and their families
Holistic Needs Assessments: what are they and how do they affect my care?

Holistic is a term that is used to describe all the needs that you might encounter as an individual. We know that cancer can affect many areas of your life and as a result your individual needs may change. As part of your ongoing care we offer you an assessment to ensure that, wherever possible, all your concerns and needs are being addressed. This is what we call a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA).

A HNA gives you a chance to think about your concerns and discuss possible solutions. It has three parts:

- A simple set of questions to identify any concerns you may have.
- A discussion with your health professional or Cancer Support Worker.
- Development of a written care plan.

The questions may be answered on paper or electronically and will take around ten minutes to complete. You can choose to be sent the check list of questions in advance or you can fill one out at the time of the appointment.

You will then meet with the health care professional to discuss the issues you have and help you consider possible solutions. Together you will agree on a plan of action to address your concerns. This is then written down as your care plan. You will receive a copy of this plan to take away, or a copy will be sent to you. Alternatively you can choose to hold the care planning discussion over the telephone and your care plan will be sent to you.

A HNA is designed to look at your individual needs and concerns, so you can decide what is included.
Benefits of having a HNA:

- You can get information and support with any concerns you may have.
- It can help you to prioritise your most important concerns.
- It can help you feel more in control and involved in your care.
- Your healthcare professional can refer you to other services, if this would help.
- It can help you to plan ahead from diagnosis through to treatment and life after treatment.

The discussion may include concerns such as:

- Physical symptoms (for example weight loss, appetite or eating and tiredness).
- Emotional concerns (for example worries about the future and relationships).
- Practical issues (for example sorting out housework and where to get equipment that can help).
- Job, money or housing worries (for example balancing work and treatment, and benefits or financial advice).
- Spiritual concerns (for example your faith or beliefs, and any impact this may be having).

You will be contacted by telephone to arrange an appointment. You are welcome to bring a family member or friend with you when the discussion takes place.
If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.

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How to contact us:

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0117 4147051
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Macmillan Cancer Support

Helpline:
0808 808 0000
7 days a week 8am–8pm

www.macmillan.org.uk

Support your local hospital charity
www.southmeadhospitalcharity.org.uk