



Supporting people affected by cancer

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Cancer Support Workers

- ▶ Cancer Support workers are part of your cancer team, working alongside the Clinical Nurse Specialist to provide you with additional support; this may include cancer information and signposting to you and your family after a cancer diagnosis. The cancer support worker can assist with the coordination of your care, throughout treatment and beyond. They will specifically focus on supported self-management, lifestyle/wellbeing support, emotional/psychological support and finding out what matters to you through a holistic needs assessment.

Case Study

- ▶ 2020 - 48 year old women referred to breast team from GP with a non-tender lump.
- ▶ Diagnosed with negative, ductal carcinoma of right breast
- ▶ *Treated with Neo-adjuvant chemotherapy*
- ▶ *Surgery - wide local excision*
- ▶ *Adjuvant radiotherapy*
- ▶ *Finished treatment October 2021. Having annual mammograms and 6 monthly follow-up appointments.*
- ▶ *At recent appointment she reported fatigue, anxiety and shortness of breath, referred to Cancer Support Worker for support and signposting*

Case Study

- ▶ Patient described feeling constantly fatigued, feeling anxious and tearful and having a loss of confidence in doing routine things such as driving. Experiencing interrupted sleep
- ▶ Patient's mother having treatment for cancer, big demanding family, busy responsible, full-time job, expectation of others that patient should be 'back to normal' after cancer episode
- ▶ Life style also discussed. Patient wanted to manage her weight and increase her activity
- ▶ * 2 years after finishing treatment patient still suffering from long term effects

Personalised care, support and proactive signposting

- ▶ Important to personalise care and support, by tailoring support and signposting to individual patient needs. Listening to ‘What matters’ to the individual.
- ▶ Consider age, gender, support network, level of self-activation, previous/ongoing mental health, spoken language, hearing, sight, cultural needs, religious/spiritual beliefs.
- ▶ Be led by the patient as to how much support is required, otherwise they can feel overwhelmed
- ▶ * Cancer Support Workers are trained in Motivational interviewing and MECC skills
- ▶ They build signposting directories and use the Cancer Map and Cancer Matters
- ▶ Make signposting proactive. Know the services, visit support centres, enquire on behalf of the patient if necessary

Outcome

- ▶ Patient's priority was to have more energy and find strategies to manage fatigue. She felt this would help to manage her busy life and aid confidence
- ▶ Patient referred and attended Tiredness and Fatigue service at the Macmillan Centre, Southampton General Hospital.
- ▶ Offered hypnotherapy for sleep problems
- ▶ Offered and accepted an appointment with a counsellor, also at the Macmillan Centre
- ▶ Liaise with her local gym (where she has a membership) to create a personalised exercise programme