

Head and Neck cancer pre-treatment assessment clinic

Important information for patients



Alternatively, you can contact the Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialist on 01270 273665.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please ask a member of staff.



What can I expect at the pre-treatment assessment clinic?

- You will be asked to complete a Holistic Needs Assessment
- You will meet a team of people who can help prepare you for your procedure and after care
- Your needs will be communicated with the centre where your treatment will be undertaken

What is a Holistic Needs Assessment?

Being diagnosed with cancer can affect many areas of your life. This is why you may be offered a Holistic Needs Assessment during your pre-treatment appointment. This assessment identifies concerns you may have – physical, emotional, practical, financial and spiritual. You will be able to discuss your concerns with the team and make a care plan to address your care and support needs.

A Holistic Needs Assessment gives you a chance to think about your concerns and discuss possible solutions.

It usually has three parts:

- A simple set of questions or check list to identify any concerns you may have
- A discussion with the Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialist, the Speech and Language Therapist and the Dietitian
- The development of a written care plan of which you will be given a copy

What are the benefits of a Holistic Needs Assessment?

- You can get information and support with any symptoms or concerns you may have
- It can help you to prioritise your most important concerns
- We can refer you to other services, if necessary
- It can help you to plan ahead, from diagnosis through to treatment and life after treatment

Meet the team

Macmillan Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialist is Margaret Doyle who will provide support and information to you and your family/carer from the time of diagnosis, throughout all stages of the cancer journey and provide a point of contact for you.

She will liaise on your behalf with other health care professionals and agencies and explain what the investigations are for and what they will involve. Also with your permission, she will discuss/explain your illness and treatment with your family/carers who may have their own questions.

Speech and Language Therapist will assess, treat and help to prevent speech, voice, swallowing and communication difficulties.

These problems may be temporary or a permanent effect of the tumour or treatment. These problems may occur before, during or after treatment. The Speech and Language Therapist aim to maximise your communication/swallow potential and provide supportive care in order to help you (and your family) to achieve optimal quality of life.

Dietitian will assess, treat and help to prevent weight loss by providing practical ways to change your diet according to the symptoms you are experiencing before, during and after your treatment.

This may involve the use of high energy nutritional supplements or, if needed, tube feeding. The dietitian can provide some nutritional advice about ways to prepare for your treatment and explain the possible nutritional side effects.

If you have any questions or concerns, please write them down on the back of this leaflet so you can discuss them with us.