Cancer & Haematology Directorate

Your follow up clinic appointments

Who is the leaflet for? What is its aim?

This leaflet is for patients moving on (transitioning) to a new stage in their cancer care. When you have completed your treatment whether it be surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy, you can start to think about the future and life away from hospital visits. This leaflet aims to explain your follow up care.

After treatment has finished, new feelings can emerge and you may be dealing with after effects. Not everyone is the same, so your feelings may be different when compared to someone else.

What happens at the end of my treatment?

Towards the end of your treatment, your follow up care will be discussed with you and you will be offered an appointment to attend a Transition Clinic. The purpose of this clinic is to help you to move from the treatment phase to follow up care. The appointment will be longer than usual and you will see a clinical nurse specialist (CNS).

What is a transition clinic?

In this clinic, the follow up for your type of cancer will be explained by your CNS. You will be given a treatment summary highlighting signs and symptoms to be aware of and information about any tests required to monitor your health. This summary will help you understand your progress and it will be useful when dealing with other organisations such as travel insurance companies.

What is discussed in these clinics?

The frequency of follow up appointments will depend on you and the type of cancer you have been treated for. During your follow up, you might see a CNS or a consultant and you may be offered a telephone appointment. This will be explained by your clinical nurse specialist.

Having health related problems can impact on many aspects of a person’s life. The physical challenges are often the most obvious, but feelings can also be a challenge. A checklist of concerns also known as a holistic needs assessment (HNA) has been designed to help you discuss any worries or issues you may have, in addition to your diagnosis and on-going care.
You will be given the opportunity to fill in a holistic needs assessment before your clinic appointment. This will give you time to think about your concerns so that during the appointment you and your CNS can discuss them and agree on a plan to meet them. The CNS will be able to advise you on where to get help and can refer you to other services if needed.

**Do I have to complete an assessment?**

No. However, research shows that patients often have worries about symptoms or signs of disease recurring during their follow up and that these rarely coincide with a clinic appointment. At the **Transition Clinic**, the CNS will talk to you about any symptoms or signs you should look out for and will give you a number to call if you are worried about any new or worsening symptoms.

At the end of the appointment, you will receive a **care plan** and a **treatment summary**. The treatment summary will clearly show all the information you have discussed. Your GP will also receive a copy of the care plan and treatment summary so you can refer to them later if necessary.

During your follow up you may require blood tests, x-rays or CT scans. The timing of these will be contained in the treatment summary and you will be told by your CNS how you will receive the results of any tests.

**Telephone Clinics**

We are also inviting some patients to be reviewed by telephone for some of their follow up consultations, in place of attending outpatient clinics. You will be telephoned by a CNS at a dedicated time slot on a certain day. You will have had any tests done before the telephone appointment so you can discuss the results, together with your current symptoms and treatment. It is important you speak freely and openly about any symptoms or concerns you have.

**What happens when I no longer need to be seen in clinic?**

At the end of your follow up, you will attend a clinic, after this clinic you will be transferred to the care of your GP. You will still be able to contact your CNS if you have any concerns and can be re-referred by your GP at any time.

**Contacts/Further information**

If you wish to discuss your care, please speak with your Clinical Nurse Specialist.

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We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site. For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk. Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.