Holistic Needs Assessment and Care Plan

Information for patients and their families

Beacon Centre
What is a holistic needs assessment and how does it affect my care?

A holistic approach takes into consideration all the needs and concerns a person may have. Receiving a cancer diagnosis may affect many areas of someone’s life and individual needs might change as a result.

The Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) has been designed to measure how you are coping physically and emotionally with the impact of your cancer diagnosis. As part of your ongoing care we offer you an assessment to ensure, where possible, that your concerns and needs are being addressed.

A HNA gives you the opportunity to think about your concerns and discuss possible solutions.

What is involved?

You will be asked to complete a simple set of questions to identify any concerns you may have. The questions can be answered on paper or electronically and will take about 10 minutes to complete. If you prefer you can choose to be sent the questions in advance to complete or they can be completed at the time of the appointment.

A health care professional, usually a cancer support worker will meet with you and together agree a plan of action to address the concerns you have raised. The actions are then put into writing and this forms your care plan.

What sort of things might be discussed during a HNA?

What is discussed will depend on the level of concern you have expressed on a variety of subjects. Discussions could include:

- **Practical issues** (for example getting the housework or gardening done and where to get equipment to help assist in day to day tasks)
- **Emotional concerns** (for example worries about the future and relationships with friends and family)
- **Spiritual concerns** (for example the impact your cancer may be having on your faith or beliefs)
- **Physical problems** (for example tiredness, change in appetite, weight loss)
- **Financial, work, housing concerns** (for example loss of income, having time off work for treatment).

What benefits are there to having a HNA?

- It can help you prioritise your most important concerns
- It can help you feel more in control and involved in your care
- It can help you plan ahead from diagnosis through to life after treatment
- You can get support and information about your concerns
- You can learn about other services that may be able to help you

Who sees my HNA and care plan?

You will be given a copy of the care plan to take away and you can share it with (or show it to) anyone you want.

Before you finish your HNA appointment you will be asked whether you are happy for the contents of your care plan to be shared with other health professionals, for example your GP.

Can I bring someone with me?

The cancer support worker will contact you by telephone to arrange an appointment. Please let them know if you would like to bring someone with you to your HNA and care planning discussion.