

Head and Neck Cancer What Happens Next?

Information for patients and carers

Introduction

You will be looked after by a multidisciplinary team (MDT). This is a group of health professionals with specialist knowledge in the management of head and neck cancer and its treatment.

Members of the Head and Neck MDT are:

- **Consultant Surgeon** – performs head and neck surgery
- **Consultant Radiologist** – reports on x-rays and scans
- **Consultant Oncologist** – specialises in radiotherapy and chemotherapy treatments
- **Consultant Pathologist** – reports on biopsy and surgical specimens
- **Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)** – provides support, advice and information before, during and after treatment
- **Dietitian** – advises about nutritional needs before, during and after treatment
- **Speech and Language Therapist** – responsible for advice on how to maintain the function of speech and the process of eating and drinking needs before, during and after treatment
- **Radiographer** – provides support, advice and information before, during and after treatment.
- **Patient pathway coordinator** – administrative support for MDT and patient

Key worker

At the time of diagnosis you will have either met or been given the contact details of your 'key worker'. This is a professional who specialises in head and neck cancer and your specific area of care need. They will be able to answer any questions you may have and will follow you throughout your pathway.

We encourage you to keep in close contact with your keyworker, using them for:

- Advice and support
- Helping with appointments
- A link between your hospital (James Paget University Hospital (JPUH), Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Ipswich and West Suffolk Hospital (WSH)) with the Cancer Centre at the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH)
- Symptom control
- Linking with your General Practitioner (GP)
- General enquiries regarding your cancer pathway

Your key worker is:

Name	Title	Contact details

Choosing the best treatment

To help the team devise the right treatment plan for you, you may need to have further investigations to assist the team with their planning. These investigations may be done at your local hospital or at the Cancer Centre (NNUH).

There are leaflets available detailing each investigation which can be given to you.

Investigations that may be required;

- **CT scan** - computerised tomography (CT) scan uses X-rays and a computer to create detailed images of the inside of the body.
- **Chest X-ray** - a chest x-ray is a fast and painless imaging test that uses certain electromagnetic waves to create pictures of the structures in and around your chest.
- **MRI scan** - MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) creates high resolution images of the body on a computer using a powerful magnet and radio frequency waves. MRI is a very safe way of producing images that can diagnose medical conditions. Unlike CT (Computed Tomography), it does not use X-rays.
- **Ultrasound scan** - An ultrasound scan is a picture of the inside of the body using sound

waves that you are unable to hear. A small hand-held sensor, which is pressed carefully against the skin surface, generates sound waves and detects any echoes reflected back off the surfaces and tissue boundaries of internal organs.

- **Orthopantomogram (OPG)** - X-ray of the teeth
- **PET-CT scan** - Positron emission tomography (PET) scans are used to produce detailed three-dimensional images of the inside of the body.
- **Nasoendoscopy** - (a small camera inserted through the nose to look at the throat).
- **EBUS (endobronchial ultrasound)** - Endobronchial ultrasound is a procedure which uses a special kind of telescope to see inside the airways.

After your investigations have been completed your case will be discussed at the Head and Neck Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meeting to plan your treatment

What is the Head and Neck Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meeting?

The Head and Neck MDT meet every Wednesday morning. The MDT is attended by all the members of the MDT previously listed. The team will look at your results and will then plan a course of treatment for you.

You will be invited to attend an appointment at the Head and Neck Clinic. This may be at your local hospital or at the Cancer Centre at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. At this appointment you will meet with the team and discuss your treatment plan. This appointment will give you, your family and/or carer the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. It may be a good idea to write some questions down before this appointment so that you do not forget to ask them. If you do forget any questions you can always contact your key worker who will be happy to help.

Treatment options

Head and neck cancers are treated using one or a combination of treatments. These usually are:

- Surgery
- Radiotherapy
- Chemotherapy
- Supportive care

Completion of treatment

On completion of your treatment, you will be seen in the Head and Neck Clinic on a regular basis for follow-up for a period of five years. After this time you will be discharged back to the care of your GP.

Please be advised that if at any point during your follow-up you develop any symptoms that you are worried about, particularly any new lumps that arise in your head and neck region, persistent pain or difficulty in swallowing, please speak to your key worker who will organise an appropriate appointment for you.

Patient Buddy Support

A cancer diagnosis may be an anxious time for you and your family. To try and help you through your cancer journey we can offer you, where possible, to meet with a patient who has undergone a similar cancer journey. If this would be of interest to you please let your keyworker know and they will arrange this.

Benefits advice

Whether you require advice about existing benefits, future benefit entitlements or simply wish to talk to an advisor about returning to work please contact your local advice services (all Monday to Friday 9-5):

Norfolk and Norwich Hospital – Big C Centre

01603 286112

norwich@big-c.co.uk

www.big-c.co.uk/norwich

James Paget Hospital - Gorleston Centre Cancer Support

01493 453930

www.big-c.co.uk/gorleston

Lowestoft and Waveney Residents – Macmillan benefits advisor

01473 264848

Norfolk Residents – D.I.A.L

01493 856900

Ipswich – Macmillan Benefits Advice Service at Suffolk County Council

01473 264848 or 0345 6006257

macmillanbenefitadviseservice@suffolk.gov.uk

Queen Elizabeth Hospital – Big C Centre

01553 818737

kingslynncentre@big-c.co.uk

www.big-c.co.uk/kingslynn

West Suffolk Hospital – Macmillan Information Support Centre

01284 713023

cancer.infocentre@wsh.nhs.uk

Switchboard	01603 286286	(24 hours)
ENT outpatients	01603 287467	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Oral Health outpatients	01603 288082	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Colney Centre	01603 288949	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Earsham Ward	01603 289950	(24 hours)
Dietitian	01603 287011	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Speech and Language	01603 287117	(Mon-Fri 9-5)

James Spence Hospital, Carlisle

Switchboard	01493 452452	(24 hours)
Head and Neck Services	01493 453146	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
ENT outpatients	01493 452767	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Oral Health outpatients	01493 452355	(Mon-Fri 9-5)

Ipswich Hospital

Switchboard	01473 712233	(24 hours)
Radiotherapy department	01473 704298	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
ENT outpatients	01473 703110	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Oral Health outpatients	01473 703200	(Mon-Fri 9-5)

Switchboard	01553 613577	(24 hours)
ENT and Oral Health outpatients	01553 613577	(Mon-Fri 9-5)

Switchboard	01284 713000	(24 hours)
ENT outpatients	01284 713713	(Mon-Fri 9-5)
Maxillofacial outpatients	01284 713550	(Mon-Fri 9-5)

