

Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA)

– planning your support and care

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Planning your care and support

An Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) gives you the chance to think about your concerns and discuss possible solutions. It is called ‘holistic’ because the assessment looks at needs or concerns you may have about any area of your life and not just about the symptoms of the cancer. These concerns may be:

Physical – Practical – Emotional – Financial – Family – Spiritual

You may be offered an HNA at diagnosis, during treatment or after treatment has ended. You can ask for an assessment at any time if you feel it would help.

Benefits of having an Holistic Needs Assessment

You can get information and support for any symptoms or concerns you may have. It can help you prioritise your most important concerns. It can help your clinical nurse specialist (CNS)/key worker understand what is important to you. Your CNS/key worker can refer you to other services, if this would help. You can find out about support groups in your area. It can help you plan ahead – from diagnosis through to treatment and life after treatment.

The HNA has 3 parts:

1. You answer a simple set of questions or fill in a checklist about all areas of your life. This is to identify any concerns you may have. You are often asked to rate how mild or severe your concerns are. This can help decide what needs to be dealt with first.
2. You discuss your answers with your key worker. This is a chance to talk about the main issues you have identified. You can bring a carer, family member or friend to this meeting.



3. You create a care plan together. You will then discuss and plan how to deal with your concerns.

The care plan may include things like ideas to help you manage emotional, physical or practical worries. It will also include contact details for organisations or services that could help with your concerns, such as the Macmillan benefits team or a dietician. Your key worker will write down the actions you agree on. You will then be offered a copy of this plan to take away with you. It may also be shared with other members of your healthcare team if it will help with your care.

1. Filling in your checklist

This can take place in the following ways:

- In clinic with your CNS/key worker present
- In the waiting area prior to an appointment
- Over the telephone
- At home

The options will be explained by your healthcare team. You should tell your CNS/key worker what you would prefer.

Doing the assessment at home

Go to <http://mycareplan.co.uk/ehna>

The forms will take approximately 10-12 minutes to complete.

Enter your date of birth

Enter your **6-digit unique pass code** – given to you by your CNS/keyworker

Consent form – the information is on a secure network and will not be shared with anyone else without your consent.

Macmillan has access to **non-identifiable information only** and uses it for evaluation and research to better understand cancer patients' needs and help develop new services. If you consent and then change your mind you can ask for details to be removed at any time. This will not affect the care that you receive. If you agree then select '**I consent**' and follow the instructions on screen.

There are no right or wrong answers but if you are unsure or **if it doesn't apply** to you, please **leave the question blank**.

Don't forget to press **SUBMIT** at the end of the assessment to save the information.

2. Discussing your answers with a health professional

When does the assessment happen?

You may be offered an HNA around the time of your diagnosis, during treatment or after treatment has ended. If this is not offered, you can ask your key worker for it. You can ask for an assessment at any time if you feel it would help and/or your needs have changed.

You may have a separate appointment for the HNA, or it may happen at the same time as other appointments you are having.

You may be sent the checklist of questions in advance or you may be asked to fill one out in the waiting room before you meet with your key worker. Help will be available if you need it.

Who do I have the assessment with?

You will talk about your answers to the checklist of concerns with your key worker or another member of your healthcare team. Whoever you speak to should have the skills and experience to help identify and discuss your concerns. They should have up-to-date knowledge of local and national services, and know how to refer you to additional services if you need them.

Tell your key worker if you would like a family member or friend with you for the discussion. If you have a carer, they may come with you and you can talk about their concerns too. However, the assessment is mainly designed to focus on your needs and concerns. An interpreter can be arranged if you need one.

How long will the assessment take?

The assessment will take approximately 30 minutes.

What the discussion may cover?

These are your concerns, so it's up to you what is discussed but the CNS/key worker may guide you towards the highest scoring concerns from your checklist. The assessment is about your personal concerns, so you can tailor the discussion to your situation.

The discussion may include concerns such as:

- physical symptoms (such as weight loss, problems with appetite or eating, and tiredness)
- treatment issues (such as side effects, fertility, and the risks and benefits of treatment)
- emotional concerns (such as worries about the future and relationships, and managing other people's reactions to your diagnosis of cancer)
- sexual concerns (such as erectile dysfunction or loss of sex drive) or family matters (such as talking about the cancer and worries about genetic risk to other family members)

- job, money or housing worries (such as balancing work and treatment, benefits or financial advice)
- practical issues (such as sorting out housework and where to get equipment that can help)
- spirituality (such as your faith or beliefs, and any impact this may have on your treatment)

Preparing for your discussion

You may want to ask yourself these questions:

- Is anything bothering you about your relationships with family or friends that could be related to the cancer?
- Are members of your family coping with knowing you have cancer?
- Would you like to know more about local services, support groups or helplines?
- Do you need advice on things like diet or stopping smoking?
- Would you like advice on how to be more physically active?
- Are you confused by anything that is happening with your treatment or follow-up care?
- Is there anything you would like explained to you?
- Do you need help with things like finances, work or education?
- Are you concerned about returning to work after treatment?
- Are you worried about what the future might bring?
- Do you feel your quality of life could be improved?
- Do you know what signs and symptoms to look out for in case the cancer comes back?
- Are you having any physical symptoms or side effects from the cancer or treatment?
- Do you know who to contact if you have any problems (for example, the contact details of your key worker)?

These are suggestions. Not all of them may be relevant to you.

3. Creating your care plan

During the discussion, you will agree with your key worker the best ways to manage your concerns. These actions are written in a document called a care plan. Your care plan will record:

- the main concerns talked about during the discussion

- suggestions and actions to help you manage your concerns
- services that may be able to support you
- what is already being done to help, or services you're using
- information about who to contact if you need more help
- which other health or social care professionals you have agreed to share the information with.

You should be given a copy of the care plan. You can request another copy from your health or social care professional at any time.

A copy of the care plan may be sent or given to:

- your GP so they know your concerns and what is planned to help you
- other members of your healthcare team to help them plan or improve your care specialist support services (such as a dietician, counsellor, benefits advisor or family support worker)

Your health or social care professional will only share the information in your care plan with your permission. They will only share as much information as people need to know for their role in your care.

Your care plan will be stored electronically or as a paper copy along with your other health records. You can ask for a review of your care plan or a new assessment at any time.

Your notes and questions

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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