

# Skin Cancer Service Hand Held Diary

## 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 [rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net).

## Introduction

This information booklet is designed to provide you and your family with information about the skin cancer service at Litchdon House, which is part of the dermatology department for North Devon District Hospital.

This is also your treatment diary. As well as this booklet, you will be given a variety of information leaflets that will be relevant to you and your diagnosis by your specialist nurse.

There are blank pages at the back of this booklet for you to write down any questions you have. A member of the skin cancer team will be happy to answer them either at your clinic appointment or over the telephone.

There is space at the back of this booklet for any member of the skin cancer team to write down comments or changes to your treatment so you have an up-to-date record of your planned care.

(We would appreciate any comments you have regarding this information booklet and how beneficial it has been for you.)

## Your personal details

Hospital number: .....

Name: .....

Date of birth: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone number: Home: .....

Work: .....

Mobile: .....

Your GP's name:

Address: .....

.....

.....

Telephone number: .....

Your consultant/associate specialist is:

.....

Based at Dermatology, Litchdon House, Landkey Road, Barnstaple

Site of primary lesion: .....

Date of excision: .....

Tumour thickness (Breslow depth): .....

Ulceration: yes / no

Stage of melanoma: .....

Treatment plan: .....

## Your skin cancer team

### Dermatologists

Doctors who specialise in skin conditions.

They may remove your skin cancer surgically or by using non-surgical methods. They may transfer your care to the plastic surgeons.

### Plastic surgeon

They may surgically remove your skin cancer and perform any other surgery you may require. They have a clinic at North Devon District Hospital on Tuesdays. Sometimes we refer patients to the plastic surgeons in Exeter directly.

### Oncologists

Doctors who specialise in treating cancer.

They may be involved in your care should you need any additional treatment such as immunotherapy or targeted treatment. They have a clinic at North Devon District Hospital.

### Skin cancer nurse specialist (CNS)

They will be able to provide you with information and explanations about all aspects of your condition and any treatments you may require.

## Skin cancer nursing service

The skin cancer nursing service aims to provide practical help, psychological and social support for patients with skin cancer.

### What is a skin cancer nurse specialist?

- They are qualified nurses who have specialised in skin cancer and work within the skin cancer team.
- They will normally see you at your first outpatient appointment where you will have been given your diagnosis. You will have regular contact with them throughout your treatment and follow up care.
- They can provide you with explanations regarding all aspects of your disease and your treatment options, and they coordinate your investigations, treatment and follow up care to ensure your "plan of care" runs smoothly without any unnecessary delays.
- They can advise you on how to look after yourself in the sun and how to check yourself for signs of further problems.
- They will provide continuing support for you and your family throughout your treatment, and they are happy for you to contact them to discuss anything you feel is important.
- They can provide you with useful contact numbers as well as names of support groups if you wish to use them.

Your skin cancer CNS team is based at Litchdon House and available on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, 8am to 5pm and on Wednesdays and Thursdays 8am to 2pm.

You can contact them by telephone on **01271 312850**.

## The skin cancer multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meeting

### What is the multi-disciplinary team?

The MDT is a team of doctors and nurses with specialist training and experience in the diagnosis and management of skin cancer.

### Members of the Skin Cancer MDT

- Consultant dermatologist
- Consultant plastic and reconstructive surgeon
- GPs with specialist interest in dermatology
- Consultant histopathologist (specialist – examines samples of body tissues for diagnosis)
- Clinical nurse specialist
- MDT coordinator
- Dermatology manager
- Consultant clinical oncologist

### MDT meetings

The MDT meets weekly to review and discuss treatment plans for patients with a diagnosis of skin cancer. Following clinical guidelines, the team will decide the most appropriate treatment plan for individual patients. This may include further tests or surgery, or referral to other specialties.

You are entitled to, and will be offered a written outcome of this meeting, known as your treatment plan after you have been seen for your diagnosis. This will be in the form of a letter to your GP, and a written copy will be sent to you.

A patient's treatment plan may be discussed more than once by the MDT, and at any point in their skin cancer pathway, for example: following a biopsy, following surgery, following a scan, or if new symptoms develop. You will be kept informed each time.

### Access to the Skin Cancer MDT

If you need to discuss your treatment plan or any other aspect of your care, please contact your specialist nurse, also known as your keyworker.

Your specialist nurse will help coordinate your care from diagnosis to treatment to follow up care. Your specialist nurse will also provide information about investigations and treatment options and a link to other professionals and support services.

## Helpful organisations

Some contacts that you may find useful:

**Melanoma UK:** 0808 171 2455. Website: [www.melanomauk.org.uk](http://www.melanomauk.org.uk). A national support and advocacy group.

**Melanoma Focus:** Provides key melanoma resources for patients and carers. They have a helpline 0808 801 0777. Website: <https://melanomafocus.org/support/>

**The Fern Centre:** 01271 311 855. The Fern Centre at North Devon District Hospital offers information and support to those affected by cancer as well as their families by offering a warm, welcoming environment providing comfort and care away from the clinical setting. The Centre provides a drop-in facility where one of the friendly volunteers would be happy to help you find the information or support you may need. The Fern Centre has information on various diagnoses and treatments as well as how to stay healthy and protect your wellbeing during your cancer journey. The Fern Centre also offers counselling and support to patients diagnosed with cancer as well as their partner and children. Patients, family members and carers can also access complimentary therapies, support groups and financial advice. Please feel free to drop in to the Fern Centre at any time to access information, support or just to have a chat with one of our volunteers.

**Macmillan:** A range of support services are provided by Macmillan Cancer Support.

- **Macmillan Support Line:** 0808 808 00 00 Monday – Friday, 9am – 8pm. This provides information, emotional support and benefits advice. It is free to call from all landlines and most mobile networks.
- **Macmillan/Citizens Advice Bureau:** 0845 894 9567 (local rate). For people living in Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon. This is a specialist welfare and benefits advice service for anyone diagnosed with cancer and their carers. The service is free for all. They provide information on benefits, tax credits, grants and loans. They provide an outreach service at the Fern Centre, North Devon District Hospital on Tuesdays 9am-12pm and Fridays 1pm-4pm.
- **Macmillan Online Community:** [www.macmillan.org.uk/community](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/community). This is an online support group where you can chat to other people who may be in a similar situation to yourself.
- **Macmillan website:** [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk). A wide range of information about all aspects of cancer, its treatment and how to manage the way it impacts upon your life.

**Cancer Research UK:** 0808 800 4040. Website: [www.cancerresearchuk.org](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org). A national information service for all types of cancer.

**Force Cancer Support and Information Service (Exeter):** 01392 402086. For those attending hospital in Exeter the charity offers support, information and complementary therapies.

**British Association of Dermatologists:** [www.bad.org.uk](http://www.bad.org.uk). A charity that provides information about skin diseases, including skin cancer. It also provides general information about the skin and current issues in skin disease.





## **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 [rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## **Have your say**

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation 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.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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