

Mac News

*The latest Weston General Hospital cancer news, views
and announcements*



We are the Bristol Macmillan Cancer Support Workers!

Hello, we are the six Macmillan Cancer Support Workers based at the Bristol Haematology and Oncology Hospital. We work alongside all clinical teams to actively provide information and support to patients to address any non-clinical concerns or worries they may have as a result of receiving a cancer diagnosis.

Supporting people affected by cancer is something we feel very passionate about. We understand that knowing what information/support is available is crucial, and can directly impact the patients' health and wellbeing in a positive way. Our focus is on the patient as a whole, not just their illness.

Our interaction with patients can be by telephone, or by face-to-face assessments (Pre-covid). Patients are referred to us by any member of the clinical team, or patients can self-refer.

To enable us to fully support the patient we will make a one to one assessment, addressing their concerns at the point of diagnosis and throughout treatment, offering advice on:

- Emotional support
- Financial support i.e benefits advice
- Practical concerns

We also help patients to navigate resources available within the community. We advise on self-care management principles, empowering people to live well with and beyond cancer. To encourage the promotion of self-care the patient, family member/carer, or supporter can access a series of short films on the Trust's [Bristol website](#). These films are tailored to provide specific information and support at each stage of a person's cancer journey.

A quote from our team...

"We really enjoy working as Cancer Support Workers and we continue to look at ways to improve and adapt our service to support the needs of all our patients"

The team is supported by Anne the Team Administrator and Trudy Cancer Information and Support Manager.

If you would like to speak to any of the team please contact us on 0117 342 1526 or macmillansupport@uhbw.nhs.uk.

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Love from the Library

Hello, I'm Hannah, one of the Librarians at Weston General Hospital. It's my job to support staff here at Weston (and Bristol) with literature searches. Essentially, people come to me with questions and conundrums, and I go and search for the evidence to support patient care, guidelines, and much more! I work in a fantastic team of 10 highly qualified library professionals within UHBW.

I help the Macmillan team with their online A-Z of patient health information resources, an aspect of my work which I am very proud of. The Macmillan team are wonderful to work with, and it's a real privilege to help them organise their fantastic collection of resources.

In January, the Library broke records for delivering 66 searches to staff within 5 days of being requested. We get asked to search for all kinds of things, such as health beliefs and inequalities in haematology patients, knowledge retention in nurse education, errors in brain radiotherapy, and all kinds of different topics around COVID-19. Like all roles within the NHS, my job is varied and no two days are the same!

While we do have lots of fiction and non-fiction books, much of our library resource is accessible online. We also train others how to search quickly for evidence.

Our physical library at Weston is a lovely, quiet and safe space, accessible 24/7 with your Trust ID. We have plenty of computers, so if you need a quiet space to work, do feel free to pop by and say hello! Alternatively, feel free to chat to us via email library@uhbw.nhs.uk.



Matrons Musings: Amanda Bessant

Spring is only around the corner & in this time of being so mindful about our wellbeing, here are a few things we can look forward to...

Having a positive start to the day listening to bird song with windows wide open rather than shut tight & curtains drawn against the dark & the cold.

Warmer weather means a change of wardrobe & I expect a spot of shopping for the more fashion conscious amongst us when permitted!

Hopefully, as restrictions are lifted we can start to go out & about to enjoy the glorious countryside & picturesque beaches on our doorstep.

There may be spring showers but the plus side is they often come with a rainbow attached, which can make even the more hard-hearted amongst us smile.

Spring is the prime blooming season for daffodils, tulips, crocus, cherry blossom & bluebells to name a few, which is a delight for the eyes as well as the soul.

For chocolate lovers, there are Easter eggs & the excitement of Easter egg hunts for the children.

This past year has been challenging for most of us but has also allowed many of us to reflect on making life changes, slowing down, looking for the good, have self-care as a priority & finding happiness in the simple things.

So when it comes to Lent, instead of 'stop having a biscuit as a morning snack', this year it could be about improving self-worth, so instead of denying yourself access to the biscuit tin reflect on ways to make a positive change by taking a leap of faith & do what makes you happy.

From Staff Nurse to Junior Sister on the OHDU

Hello, My name is Madeline. I have recently been appointed a developmental Band 6 Junior Sister from a Band 5 Staff Nurse on the Oncology and Haematology Day Unit at Weston General Hospital. One of the key differences between a Band 5 and Band 6 is the support of staff.

As a Band 6, junior colleagues look to you for answers and rely on you for guidance involving patients chemotherapy regimes and their supportive treatments. As a Band 6, I participate in the daily coordination on the unit, ensuring staff are supported whilst they administer chemotherapy to patients and dealing with issues that may arise.

I am involved with the recruitment and development of staff overseeing induction and training programs and implementing staff development initiatives. This has been challenging in the Covid climate and, as a team, we all continue to learn and adapt to the changes it has brought to how we work.

Administering chemotherapy to patients can be very rewarding I feel privileged to work on the unit, caring for a group of inspiring patients, and being part of a committed and friendly team.



Judy Body Macmillan Benefits advisor



I started training as a volunteer for North Somerset Citizens Advice (CANS) in the spring of 2009 and gained my Certificate in Advice one year later. I volunteered for a while, gaining a short term paid post in 2012 whilst also embarking on a Counselling degree and at the same time finishing an Open University Honours degree.



In 2015 the post of Macmillan Benefits adviser became vacant and I was the successful candidate. I think that my experience of being a cancer patient and going through treatment has helped me to empathise with patient concerns and relate to their worries. The main worry of the majority of the cancer patients I meet is financial. What will happen if I cannot work? What will happen to my family if I die? While benefits are not a magic wand they can provide a sticking plaster for those in need.

The role also has a counselling element to it. Covid restrictions and working from home have necessarily changed the way I work and have brought their own challenges, not least being the loss of on-hand expertise from colleagues with other specialities.



Completing benefit forms over the phone with clients can be frustrating, especially those applying for disability benefits. When not 'in the office', I have a 50 strong flock of Wiltshire Horn sheep and a 40+ flock of laying hens, supplying eggs to neighbours and Macmillan support staff. There is usually an animal joining me in my home office, usually a cat or dog, very occasionally a sheep and last July a few newly hatched chicks in a box under the desk!

Last word: Macmillan Dietetic Service

Contact the Macmillan Centre:

01934 881079
Extension 5078 or 5079

or email
macmillansupportcentr
eWGH@uhbw.nhs.uk

For information, support or just someone to talk to, call 0808 808 00 00 or visit macmillan.org.uk

Edited by Emma Pugh
Macmillan Centre
Manager

For further information or future contributions please email: emma.pugh@uhbw.nhs.uk

Our service is here for people who require support with diet and nutrition as a result of a cancer diagnosis, or cancer treatment. We offer individualised dietetic support at all stages of the cancer journey. Areas that we commonly support people with include:



We accept referrals from health care professionals and self-referrals. During the COVID-19 pandemic we continue to see inpatients on the wards; and have adapted our outpatient and Oncology and Haematology Day Unit consultations from face to face, to telephone or Attend Anywhere.

We provide expert nutritional information for patients at Next Steps events. During the COVID-19 pandemic there has been an increased need for these events to be delivered virtually. Together with dietitians across UHBW and the Macmillan teams; we have developed video presentations to allow nutritional support and dietary information to remain available for patients during this time.

We are currently working with dietitians across UHBW to create a mini series of webinars which provide first line support to patients on the management of eating difficulties during cancer and cancer treatment. This should enable people with cancer and their carers to access information earlier in the patient pathway. More information shall be coming soon!

We work as part of the Trust's Nutrition and Dietetic and Oncology Services. You can contact us on extension 3554 or bleep 280. Our team members are:

Sian Russell, Dietitian Sarah Milward, Dietitian Richard Westhead, Dietetic Support Worker

UHBW and NBT Dietitians have worked in collaboration with Penny Brohn and Macmillan to produce 2 key information booklets for patients which health care professionals may also find useful. They are downloadable and from the DMS: Eating well during cancer treatment and Eating well when eating becomes difficult.

Using Mindfulness and Mindful Eating to Support our Health and Wellbeing

As well as supporting patients, it is important that we look after ourselves. During the COVID-19 pandemic we have heard more about mindfulness as a tool to support our mental health. Mindfulness involves paying more attention to the present moment. As well as practicing mindfulness in daily life it can be helpful to set aside time for mindfulness meditation. This involves sitting silently and paying attention to thoughts, sounds, and the sensations of breathing or parts of the body, bringing your attention back whenever the mind starts to wander. More information and links to mindful practices can be found on the [NHS website](#).

Mindful eating is a concept that dietitians are familiar with. It encourages a positive relationship with food, moving from eating mindlessly to mindfully. Mindful eating maintains an in the moment awareness of the food and drink we are buying, cooking, serving and eating. It provides an opportunity to appreciate food more, and make a better connection with it. It can help support the management of emotional eating and binge eating and promote a healthier relationship with food. Eating mindfully may also help regulate appetite, aid digestion and make eating an enjoyable and pleasurable experience. If you would like to find out more please visit the [BDA website](#).

Macmillan First-line nutrition-focused literature is available from the Macmillan Support Centre.