

**WE ARE  
MACMILLAN.  
CANCER SUPPORT**

# Macmillan Quality Environment Mark<sup>®</sup> (MQEM)

Assessment handbook

August 2015



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## Introduction

Macmillan wants people affected by cancer to be treated and supported in high quality environments which help them during their treatment and enables them to live with, and beyond cancer. Macmillan also wants these environments to provide a space which facilitates information, health and social care professionals to provide the very best possible care and support. That is why the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark ® (MQEM) has been developed. It is the first evidence based tool that specifically assesses the physical environments in which information, treatment and support are provided to people affected by cancer.

The MQEM award is a ground-breaking award that all public, voluntary and private health and social care providers should aspire to attain. Also:-

- MQEM identifies and recognises cancer environments that provide high levels of support and care for people affected by cancer.
- MQEM has been developed in partnership with the Department of Health in England, as it is a core component of the English Cancer Reform Strategy.
- Macmillan has worked with a leading academic institution to build a strong evidence base establishing the link between good environments and enhanced health outcomes.
- People affected by cancer suggested and prioritised the criteria for the MQEM standards, and have therefore participated in the formal assessment of cancer environments.

The benefits are as follows:

- If an environment meets the MQEM standards, it will be presented with an MQEM award plaque that it can proudly display in its reception area. The environment will then be reassessed every three years to ensure that high standards are being maintained.
- Health and social care providers who receive the MQEM award will also be included on a special section of Macmillan's website. Additionally, cancer environments are now able to showcase their achievement on the NHS Choices website by populating it with their own text and the MQEM award logo.
- If an environment does not meet the MQEM standards, Macmillan's Cancer Environments Department will work with the facility to support the improvement of the environment. Macmillan will provide expertise and funding where appropriate.

## Our contract assessors

Macmillan has awarded DNV GL the contract to conduct the formal assessments of cancer environments against the MQEM standards. A DNV GL assessor will not assess or advise an organisation where they have been employed in the past five years.

DNV GL's assessment team will be responsible for conducting assessments and for answering any queries relating to the MQEM assessment process. A person affected by cancer is included within each of the assessment teams as often as is practicable. These User Assessors have been trained by DNV GL in partnership with Macmillan.

As a specialist provider of services for managing risks, DNV GL may bid for and undertake work for organisations that are subject to assessment against the MQEM.

## Our partner organisations

Prior to assessment it is important that the partner organisation identifies an MQEM champion within their own organisation. This person will take responsibility for coordinating the assessment process within the organisation, they will be the point of contact for all external organisations involved in the MQEM, and they will promote the MQEM standards and award within their organisation. This person also has responsibility for notifying Macmillan of any situation which may compromise or affect the reputation of the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark.

It is vital that organisations provide DNV GL with up-to-date contact details of the nominated MQEM champion, as they will be responsible for arranging and coordinating assessments. Any important announcements and invitations to learning events will be sent to this individual.

## General principles

Macmillan Quality Environment Mark® (MQEM)

The MQEM programme and standards are reviewed every three years. The current MQEM assessment tool (V2) can be requested from [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk) and can be supplied in either electronic or hardcopy.

Macmillan is constantly striving to improve the usability of the MQEM standards, self-assessment tool and associated assessment process, and we welcome your feedback. Please email [mqem@dnvgl.com](mailto:mqem@dnvgl.com) to inform us of any known or suspected errors or omissions, suggestions for improvement, general comments or queries relating to the MQEM.

### Who can apply?

Any health, charity or social care organisation that can demonstrate that at least 80% of its services are cancer-related may apply for the MQEM assessment process. Such services may include: radiotherapy, chemotherapy and oncology treatment facilities, hospice and palliative care environments, cancer surgical wards, diagnostic facilities, and cancer information and support centres.

The MQEM standards are not relevant to Macmillan Info Pods. These are stand-alone facilities which, given their construction, do not have their own reception areas, toilets, waiting rooms, quiet or counselling rooms, treatment rooms, etc. If your facility is a small, single room information centre situated in a hospital or other large building or if you are unsure if your facility is eligible to apply for

MQEM please contact DNVGL for further advice.

Each applying organisation will need to decide which environment(s) are to be assessed. For example, an NHS trust may have an oncology day unit and a separate oncology inpatient ward. The trust may choose to have two separate external assessments of these facilities or a single assessment covering both. If the assessment is to cover more than one environment DNV GL must be made aware of this in advance of the assessment to allow them to determine whether the assessment can be completed in the time allocated.

Organisations may not apply for assessment for facilities that have been operational for less than 12 months. This is because the MQEM standards focus heavily on the importance of cancer facilities using the feedback received by the users of their service to continuously improve the physical environment. In situations where facilities are new, it is unlikely that sufficient user feedback will have been gathered to demonstrate compliance with these standards.

If DNV GL consider that an organisation does not meet the MQEM standards, the organisation may apply for reassessment as soon as it has addressed the outstanding issues and recommendations made in the assessment report.

### **Assessment charge**

Application fees do not apply to any NHS organisation, or cancer service managed by any of the Departments of Health or Health Estates. Charities and healthcare organisations with a Macmillan professional in post will also be exempt from the fee. One award plaque per facility will be provided free of charge, but any additional plaques requested will incur a fee of £230 (plus VAT) per plaque.

Private, for profit healthcare organisations will incur a one-off charge of £1,000 (plus VAT) for the assessment and £230 (plus VAT) per award plaque. The invoice will be raised by the Macmillan Cancer Environments Department after the assessment has taken place. All fees quoted are subject to change with one month's notice. Any change will be advertised on the MQEM website. There are no assessment fees for any organisation for the reassessments which occur every three years.

### **The assessment process**

Following a successful formal assessment, the organisation will be presented with the MQEM award as a visible identification and reassurance of environmental quality to patients, staff and visitors. The award will be made for a three year period (36 months from the date of assessment) after which the organisation will need to be reassessed. If the facility does not wish to be reassessed then Macmillan will reserve the right to ask for the original award to be removed.

In exceptional circumstances, such as when there are concerns about an organisation's environment, Macmillan may visit outside the specified schedule in order to ensure the facility is maintaining the standards specified in the MQEM standards.

If an organisation cancels an assessment without good reason and / or giving reasonable notice, Macmillan reserves the right to charge the organisation for all non-refundable accommodation and travel expenses incurred by the contract assessors.

### **Support**

Macmillan will work with organisations that don't meet the MQEM standards; supporting them to improve and develop their physical environment and the users' experience. Macmillan's network of service development teams will be able to provide free cancer-specific support and expertise. Please email [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk) for more details.

Some organisations may require additional support with the assessment process and what can be expected. DNV GL may provide an opportunity for such organisations to purchase a limited number of additional support visits. For further information, please contact your assessors or email [mqem@dnvgl.com](mailto:mqem@dnvgl.com).

### Information sharing

When a partner organisation has passed the MQEM formal assessment, their details will be included on the Macmillan website at:

[www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/AwardWinningEnvironments.aspx](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/AwardWinningEnvironments.aspx)

The DNV GL assessment team is always happy to answer questions (by email or telephone) regarding specific aspects of the MQEM programme and standards. However, the assessors are not in a position to be able to review any documentation submitted to them outside of the formal assessment.

Further information about assessments may be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Organisations may wish to publish information relating to their assessments on their own websites. Such information might include assessment reports or minutes of meetings where MQEM assessments have been discussed. Macmillan recognises this as good practice but also request that neither Macmillan staff nor DNV GL staff nor volunteer assessors be named in such documents. In publishing assessment-related information on their websites, organisations are reminded that they have a duty to ensure the accuracy of such information.

The MQEM assessment process does not specifically require any patient identifiable information to be presented, but should the organisation wish to share such information or data, it should be anonymised, and all patient identifiable details removed.

## Assessment procedure

### Self-assessment

The first stage of the application process is for the organisation to undertake a self-assessment using the MQEM self-assessment tool. One of our Macmillan Development Managers (MDM) may have already provided this. If not, it can be requested by sending an email to [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk).

This self-assessment allows the organisation to determine whether it has met the required standards to obtain the MQEM award. If the standards seem to have been met, the organisation can then apply for an external assessment. If the organisation does not think it meets the MQEM standard, the organisation should contact Macmillan for support and advice by emailing [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk).

### Pre-external assessment

To apply for an assessment, the organisation must complete the online application form at [www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/ApplyingForTheAward.aspx](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/ApplyingForTheAward.aspx). The application will be automatically forwarded to DNV GL who will acknowledge receipt within five working days and send an information pack to the organisation containing the key contact details and assessment information. Within 10 working days, a DNV GL assessor will offer the organisation a selection of possible assessment dates. When a date has been agreed, DNV GL will write to the organisation confirming the date and setting out a proposed programme for the

assessment. DNV GL will do their best to accommodate requests for visits at a time most convenient for the organisation.

### Assessment

Assessments will be conducted by a professional assessor from DNV GL accompanied, where possible, by one trained Volunteer User Assessor (a person affected by cancer recruited by Macmillan). Occasionally, the assessors may be joined by another assessor or manager, or a representative from Macmillan or other relevant body for ongoing development and quality assurance purposes. The organisation will be notified of the number of visitors in advance.

During the assessment, the organisation must demonstrate compliance with the MQEM standards and provide evidence for each of the criteria. The time available for the assessment will not permit the assessors to search for evidence, so this will need to be presented by the organisation. Documentary evidence, where required, may be provided in electronic or paper format (or a combination of both). The assessors will work through each of the MQEM standards, evaluating the evidence provided, and recording the findings.

The organisation's MQEM champion must ensure that all staff involved are fully briefed on the purpose of the assessment, their specific role, and the role of the assessors.

During the visit, the assessors will need to talk to a number of people from the organisation to clarify and support the documentation provided. In addition, the assessors will ask to visit areas of the organisation to review evidence in practice. A short period is allowed at the end of the assessment visit for informal feedback. The assessors and the organisation should use this time as an opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues or concerns. The assessors may need some time alone to consider the evidence thoroughly and review their findings.

The outcome will be based on the evidence provided for review during the assessment period only. The assessors may not be able to inform the organisation of the outcome at the end of the assessment visit, as on some occasions it may be necessary for the assessors to review their findings with colleagues to ensure consistency.

Please note that at no time should the arrangements for the assessment visit compromise services to users in any way.

### Post-assessment

Following the assessment, DNV GL will notify Macmillan of the outcome. The applicant and Macmillan will receive a detailed report from DNV GL on the assessment outcome within 20 working days of the assessment date.

It is a requirement that a local award event is arranged whereby Macmillan can present the MQEM award to the organisation. Macmillan's regional Communications Managers will assist with the organisation of these events.

All awards will be provided in English (and Welsh where required). The MQEM award, feedback forms and rack must be displayed in accordance with the instructions included. Organisations are asked to confirm in writing to [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk) that these actions have been undertaken.

Following a successful assessment, it is recommended that organisations undertake a regular self-assessment against the MQEM using the self-assessment tool. It is recommended that action plans should be completed following each assessment, and that these should include realistic timescales and designated responsibilities for taking the actions forward.

If the organisation has any concerns about the assessment or report, it should raise these with their assessors or DNV GL's Healthcare Lead as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after receipt of the report. If the concerns are not resolved to the organisation's satisfaction and it feels that the assessment outcome is unjust, it may refer the matter to Macmillan. An email or letter should be sent to Macmillan's Quality Programme Manager as soon as possible and no later than 40 working days following receipt of the assessment report. Any allegations regarding the improper conduct of MQEM assessors should also be referred there as soon as possible, their contact details are shown at the end of this document.

Rare instances of inappropriate behaviour towards assessors in performing their duties have made it necessary for DNV GL to introduce a procedure for dealing with abusive or threatening behaviour from external sources. A copy of this procedure can be obtained on request from DNV GL.

As part of its commitment to the provision of a quality service to Macmillan and the organisations which it assesses, DNV GL aims to gather feedback on the services provided. All organisations that undergo assessment against the MQEM standards will be asked to complete a web-based survey. Feedback from the survey will be used to inform the development of the MQEM standards and assessment process.



## Contacts

General MQEM enquiries: [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk)

MQEM Programme Coordinator: Paula Green, [pgreen@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:pgreen@macmillan.org.uk)

Quality Programme Manager: Jill Weeden, [jweeden@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:jweeden@macmillan.org.uk)

Telephone: 020 7091 2348 / 020 7840 4769

To request a copy of the self-assessment tool, contact: [mqem@macmillan.org.uk](mailto:mqem@macmillan.org.uk)

The assessment criteria and further information about the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark ® can be obtained from our website:

[www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/MQEM.aspx](http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Aboutus/Healthprofessionals/MQEM/MQEM.aspx)

DNV GL Healthcare UK: Palace House, 3 Cathedral Street, London, SE1 9DE

General enquiries: 01785 761001 or [mqem@dnvgl.com](mailto:mqem@dnvgl.com)