About this project

The Westerhaven TCAT project aimed to empower people to optimise their wellbeing after cancer treatment, whether they were rehabilitating back to normal life or entering the palliative phase of their illness.

It devised a care pathway whereby all patients who had completed their cancer treatment - as well as their carers - were offered access to a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) within Wester Hailes Medical Practice. In addition, it raised awareness of the Active Inclusion Protocol/referral pathway among other local GP practices.

It also offered HNAs to all users of the Westerhaven Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service regardless of the stage of their cancer journey.

How this project worked

- Patients registered at Wester Hailes Medical Practice who are finishing cancer treatment are proactively identified.
- The HNA is delivered by a Macmillan-trained professional and a care plan is created.
- GP follows up with a phone call two weeks later to help overcome any barriers to attendance (e.g. mobility/language).
- Patient is sent an invitation to attend an HNA at Westerhaven.
- The project ran for two years from April 2015 to April 2017.

From the start of the TCAT project, the offer of an HNA was extended to include all new patients and carers coming into Westerhaven (and not just those finishing treatment for cancer).

By 2016 more than one in two (54%) of patients using Westerhaven were receiving palliative care compared to one in ten (9%) in 2014.

Between April 2015 and April 2017, 148 people attended Westerhaven and were given an HNA and care plan.

Demographic data was collected for 117 people:
- 66 (56%) had a diagnosis of cancer
- 51 (44%) were family members/carers

‘It was good to be able to talk to people with both empathy and understanding of our situation. I cannot thank the staff at Westerhaven enough for the support that we got. I don’t know how we would have coped without it.’

Carer
A postal survey was sent out to 60 service users. Of the 28 (47%) who responded, 21 patients and 7 carers found input from Westerhaven helped meet their needs in a range of self-management related areas:

Patients  Carers

Managing the side effects of treatment
Knowing where to seek help if needed
Understanding who to ask for help if needed
Awareness of support available to family/carers
Knowing about other support services/groups

As a result of the Proactive Inclusion Protocol:

32 Wester Hailes-registered patients who had completed treatment were identified and invited for an appointment and 12 (37%) attended

18% Wester Hailes-registered patients attending Westerhaven TCAT accounted for almost 1 in 5 of all new patient contacts

10 patients at the end of active treatment were referred from other local health centres

11 carers/family members caring for a person at end of treatment were referred directly to Westerhaven TCAT

Data from completed HNAs for 95 service users found:

38% of patients and 25% of carers reported being concerned about housing and money

Patients reported an average of 10.23 concerns and carers an average of 8.5 concerns

The most frequently reported concerns of patients were tiredness/exhaustion/fatigue and worry/fear/anxiety

For carers, worry, fear or anxiety and sadness/depression were the top two concerns

What happened next?

The TCAT project at Westerhaven has proved to be a valued, proactive and inclusive source of support for people affected by cancer in South West Edinburgh.

Recommendations:

• develop the outreach service to meet the needs of cancer patients unable to attend the centre due to ill-health and extend it to include other patients with chronic long-term conditions
• improve access into the service for those not registered with the host GP
• continue to proactively identify people affected by cancer who would benefit from an HNA/care plan.

Between December 2015–16, 21 patients received outreach services.

About TCAT

TCAT was set up to improve the way people with cancer are supported during and after treatment. It’s a partnership between the Scottish Government, Macmillan Cancer Support, NHS Scotland and local authorities. It tests and spreads new models of care and support built around what people with cancer need.

The statistics in this report are the results of a self-evaluation carried out by local project staff with support from Edinburgh Napier University TCAT Evaluation Team. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent those of Edinburgh Napier University. Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity in England and Wales (261017), Scotland (SC039907) and the Isle of Man (604). MAC16222