1. Set your objectives and prioritise
Agree, identify and prioritise objectives with your employing Health Care Organisation – use their Cancer Plan or Cancer Strategy.

2. Set achievable timescales
Be realistic and document your plans. Remember that you only have limited hours per week to do this work.

3. Get your IT sorted
To be effective you need to be adequately equipped. Your partner organisation will have an agreement with Macmillan that they will supply necessary equipment. Obtain an Organisational log in and access to their intranet.

4. Background knowledge
Understand the National and Macmillan Cancer and End of Life Strategies, and Macmillan’s new Organisational Direction, as well as the locality strategy and local Macmillan Geographical Strategy. This will allow you to talk to colleagues with confidence and authority.

5. Know your support
- Within your Healthcare Organisation – Such as your Commissioning manager, Board member and admin support.
- Macmillan Induction Programmes – These will give you a good background into how the Macmillan “Family” works.
- Within Macmillan – meet your Macmillan GP Adviser (GPA), Geographical Head of Service, Macmillan Partnership Quality Lead (PQL) and Macmillan Partnership Manager (MPM) who will support you clinically, managerially and strategically.
- Macmillan GP Peers – Get to know other local Macmillan GPs. Participate in, or set up a Macmillan Learning Set for peer support.

6. Networking
Find your local “influencers”. They may be Cancer Leads in primary or secondary care, CNS’s, or, in England, your local Cancer Alliance. Get yourself known within your primary care community and with the local population. This will help develop your ideas and strengthen your credibility.

7. Practice visits
Target those practices who have a greater need rather than trying to get round everyone, or use other ways of influencing other than visiting.

8. Use incentive schemes
Financial levers (such as Locally Enhanced Services, or CQUINS (Commissioning for QUality and INovation payment framework) are useful for encouraging participation in audits, or implementing new service structures. Find out from other Mac GP’s what has been successful elsewhere.

9. Be assertive
Learn to say “no”. Remember your objectives and go only to those meetings that will be helpful or serve your cause.

10. Be strategic
Consider the bigger picture. Influencing will need to occur at grass roots level (your GPs and Primary Care Community) but also at Strategic Level – your Health Care Organisation’s Board.

For useful guides and tips, take a look at the Macmillan GP resource pack on Learn Zone. learnzone.org.uk