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WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board



Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_160_25

You asked:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding support services available to haemato-oncology and leukaemia patients at your NHS health board. Please provide responses to the following questions:

Support Workers:

- 1. Do you provide cancer support workers, or similar roles (e.g., navigators, cancer care co-ordinators) to your haemato-oncology patients?**
 - o **If yes: a. How many do you employ, and what is the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)?**
 - b. What is their average caseload?**
 - c. How many are employed by a third party (e.g., charity), and what is the FTE?**
 - d. What is their caseload?**

We have 1 WTE band 4 cancer navigator for haematology. This post is currently funded by Macmillan, but the ongoing cost will be covered by the Health Board. The average caseload is fifty patients actively being supported.

- 2. What percentage of your leukaemia patients have accessed their services?**

All haematology patients are contacted by the cancer navigator and offered support. All patients are provided the contact details for the Navigator and their key worker.

Counselling Services:

- 3. Do you provide counselling or psychological support for leukaemia patients through:**
 - a) Mental health professionals?**
 - b) Digital platforms (e.g., apps)?**
 - c) Any other relevant services?**

We provide counselling and psychological support to leukaemia patients. We have a cancer clinical psychology service for patients in need of level 4 support. We also have service level agreements with third sector counselling services and signpost to digital platforms.

- 4. How many staff do you employ to provide cancer emotional support, and what is the FTE?**

We have 3 team members in the clinical psychology service, 1.6 WTE.

5. What are:

- a) The average,**
- b) The minimum, and**
- c) The maximum waiting times from referral to first appointment or first access point for emotional support services?**

The clinical psychology service is a highly specialist service and waiting times are currently between 7 and 12 weeks. Priority is given to individuals with a palliative diagnosis. Level three support and self-management tips are provided in the interim. Individuals in acute crisis are referred to the mental health team as an emergency and seen immediately.

We also have access to counselling provision, both face to face and virtual, via third sector services, for level three input. We have a service level agreement for this. We also signpost to online counselling support and mindfulness resources. Locally we also have generic mental health provision which we refer to.

Waiting times for level three provision ranges from 48 hours (for first contact) to less than three weeks, but is generally less than one week, depending on which service the individual is referred to. None of the third sector (cancer only) services have a long waiting time for access.

6. How do patients get referred to these services (e.g., clinical nurse specialist, GP, self-referral)?

Referral to all of these services can be made by any professional or as a self-referral.

7. Are there any limits on the number of sessions or amount of time cancer patients can access counselling?

Generally, the services offer 6 sessions. However, if more are needed or the individual needs to re access the service, this is possible.

8. What percentage of all cancer patients you care for access emotional support in-house?

Around 10% of our cancer patients access in house emotional support. Please note this includes counselling prior to mastectomies for our breast cancer patients.

9. What percentage of leukaemia patients you care for access emotional support?

We are not able to provide information on the number of leukaemia patients who access this service specifically. The services do not capture data to that level of granularity.

Welfare Support:

10. Do you offer welfare advice or practical support (e.g., benefits, financial help, transport) to:

- a) All cancer patients?**
- b) Leukaemia patients?**

Welfare benefits advice is offered to all of our cancer patients. This includes leukaemia patients.

11. How do patients access this support, and how is the information shared with them?

The clinician (can be nurse, doctor or support worker) will provide them the information and make the referral (with their consent). Alternatively, the individual can refer themselves.

12. How many staff and FTE staff are responsible for delivering welfare support services?

Our internal welfare benefits service consists of 3 WTE advisers and a 0.4 WTE support worker. However, we also refer to other third sector services, for the less complex cases.

13. How many leukaemia patients accessed welfare support in the past 12 months? What percentage of the total leukaemia patients you care for does this represent?

Our internal service supported 94 haematology patients last year. Unfortunately, we do not capture a breakdown of diagnosis within that. We also do not have data on the number that accessed the alternative welfare provision. The overall number, for haematology, will be higher.