

The cancer story is changing, with cancer now considered a long term condition. Practice nurses have a proven track record of success in supporting people with other long term conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and COPD. *Why not cancer?*

# CANCER AS A LONG TERM CONDITION: PRACTICE NURSE PILOT

## Our questions...

What additional knowledge and skills will practice nurses need to take on an enhanced role in supporting people affected by cancer?

What is the best way for practice nurses to receive this learning?

Will this learning change their practice?

Will there be a benefit for patients?

## What did we do?

We took 10 experienced practice nurses, one patient representative and a Macmillan GP. We met for two whole day and seven half day sessions over eight months.



We fostered a collaborative learn and share environment by encouraging the practice nurses to try new ways of working within their practice and share experiences with the group.

*"I've gained confidence that, as a practice nurse, I do have a role and that I can contribute to the care of our patients who live with cancer."*

We developed an initial framework for the course but ensured there was space for the group to modify the content as further learning needs emerged.

The initial framework included topics such as pathology of cancer, cancer treatment, self management, late effects, recurrence and lifestyle.

## How did we do?

The findings show that there was considerable learning for each of the practice nurses who took part.

- Improved confidence and feeling better prepared to talk to people about cancer.
- Increased willingness to have conversations with people affected by cancer, something they previously would have avoided.
- Extension to their existing role, now carrying out cancer care reviews and providing support to both patients and colleagues.
- Increase in signposting to further information and support.

## What's next?

We are now supporting 10 new pilot courses involving over 100 practice nurses across the UK.

Macmillan will support participants of the courses to stay in touch by inviting them to join our wider community of influence, and attend our annual primary care conferences.

We will be reviewing the learning from the collective pilots to consider how we can ensure that all practice nurses have the opportunity to develop their confidence and skills in supporting people with cancer.