

# The role of the CNS and key worker within the MDT

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## What is a CNS?

- ▶ Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) are registered nurses who have studied to degree level and who are expected to be working towards Masters level
- ▶ They are clinical experts in evidence based nursing practice within a specialty area i.e. Palliative Care, Lung Cancer

(Excellence in Cancer Care, The contribution of the CNS NCA 2010)

## CNS Role

- ▶ CNSs act as the key accessible professional for the Multidisciplinary team
- ▶ Work with a tumour specific Team
- ▶ The CNS is key worker to individual patients, can quickly identify emerging issues that may require medical attention, enabling care to be planned and prevent emergency admissions

Macmillan Cancer Support Web site 2013

## CNS Role

- ▶ CNSs are often the main point of contact for cancer patients and their families, and work closely with colleagues throughout the patient's cancer journey
- ▶ As a result, they are well placed to support patients at each stage of their pathway and to promote integration within care teams

(Excellence in Cancer Care, The contribution of the CNS NCA 2010)

## Key Contributions that CNSs make to cancer care.



## What is a Key Worker?

- ▶ A key worker is a health professional who is a point of contact throughout a patient's cancer journey

## Concept of a “key worker”

- ▶ The concept of a ‘key worker’ for patients with a diagnosis of cancer was first identified by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in 2004

Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer guidance (2004)

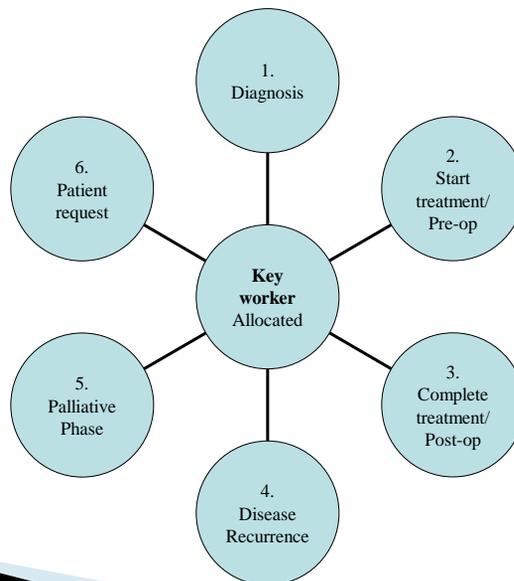
## Key worker definition

- ▶ A single named person, who has agreed with the patient to be their first point of contact for support, information and onward referral

## Key worker identification points:

- ▶ at point of diagnosis
- ▶ commencement of treatment / pre-operative planning
- ▶ completion of treatment plan / post-operative histology confirmation
- ▶ disease recurrence
- ▶ palliative phase
- ▶ at any other point patient requests it

## Allocation of the role of key worker



## The role of the key worker

- ▶ The NICE 2004 guidance suggests that the key worker role may include:
- ▶ *“Orchestrating assessments to ensure patients’ needs are met,*
- ▶ *Ensuring care plans have been agreed with patients*
- ▶ *Ensuring findings from assessments and care plans are communicate to others involved in patient care*
- ▶ *Ensuring patients know who to contact when help or advice is needed, whether the ‘key worker’ or other appropriate personnel*
- ▶ *Managing transition of care through the patient pathway*

NICE Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer guidance (2004)

## Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

- ▶ MDT is defined as a group of Doctors and other health professionals with expertise in a specific Cancer, who together discuss and manage an individual patients care. They Plan the treatment that is best for the patient
- ▶ NICE recommend that people with cancer should be managed by a multidisciplinary team

(Excellence in Cancer Care, The contribution of the CNS NCA 2010)

## CNS in the MDT

- ▶ The CNS should be recognised as the patients advocate at MDT meetings and be supported by the MDT to deliver patient centred care that responds to the patients individual needs

## CNS in the MDT

- ▶ CNSs sit at the heart of the MDT and as a result, are able to have influence across the whole patient pathway
- ▶ The National Cancer Action Team has reported that cancer nurse specialists are increasingly taking a leadership role in refining systems and smoothing care pathways, making a demonstrable contribution to effectiveness, patient experience and safety

Understanding the value of lung cancer nurse specialists Jan 2013

## conclusion

- ▶ The CNS role in making sure that patients are discussed at MDT meetings is vital
- ▶ The UK Lung Cancer Coalition highlighted in its recent report the important role the CNS plays in advocating for patients at MDT meetings and throughout the patient pathway
- ▶ In acting as the patient's advocate, the CNS also plays a key role in ensuring that multidisciplinary care is responsive to the patient's individual needs and preferences

## Any Questions?

### References

- ▶ Understanding the value of lung cancer nurse specialists January 2013 document via [www.roycastle.org/lung-cancer](http://www.roycastle.org/lung-cancer)
- ▶ NICE Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer guidance (2004) [www.pathways.nice.org.uk](http://www.pathways.nice.org.uk)
- ▶ Excellence in Cancer Care, The contribution of the CNS NCA 2010 Document via [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)
- ▶ *East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust Key worker ,operational policy document 2005.*