



Cancer: Out of Sight Out of Mind

All.Can UK: Placing the psychological wellbeing of people with cancer on equal footing to physical health





The link between mental health and cancer is well understood:

1/3 of cancer patients experience a mental health concern, during or after treatment¹






1 year following diagnosis, **1 in 10 patients** require an intervention by specialist psychiatric services²




Mental health problems raise total health care costs

45%⁴ for each person with a long-term condition


10 years following treatment, **54%** of cancer survivors suffer from at least 1 psychological issue³


In 2018, **All.Can** conducted a patient survey in over **10** countries, which asked almost **4,000** cancer patients and carers where they identified inefficiencies in their care. In the UK, **322** people participated.⁵





20% of UK survey participants said they **did not need** psychological support during their care⁵



For patients that needed support, **50%** said it was unavailable⁵




The consequences of not meeting psychological support needs are far reaching. **Individuals experience amplification of bodily symptoms and worse quality-of-life**⁶





In order to gain a deeper understanding of the inefficiencies in cancer care, **All.Can UK** gathered evidence from several health charities and expert academics. **All.Can UK** found that it is still difficult for some people with cancer to access this vital support:⁷


Stakeholder concerns about staffing, funding and coordination of psychological oncology services: There is a lack of awareness of the resources and services available, as well as limited training for staff, which limits the NHS' ability to identify mental illness and sign-post patients to support.⁷




The value of peer and third sector support is often not flagged to patients and can be under-estimated:⁷ less than 40% of people who took All.Can's survey said they had not been given any information about patient groups, health charities, peer support groups, or other organisations who could support them.⁵




Support is too often "one size fits all" rather than tailored to the individual: As a result, patient groups often have to provide services and support to ensure patients' needs are met.⁷



Routine screening of cancer patients for psychological concerns is not commonplace: While people with cancer are given information about mental health at the point of their diagnosis, this is not always followed up and there is local variation in the use of screening tools.⁷



Access to psychological support can vary from region to region: Due to local differences in spending and capacity to deliver mental health services, the availability of care is variable across the country. This is not helped by the fact that there is little publicly available data on people with cancer and mental health conditions.⁷



1. Mental Health Foundation – Cancer patients left to cope with mental health problems alone <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/news/cancer-patients-left-cope-mental-health-problems-alone> [Accessed November 2020]
 2. London Cancer – Service Specification Psychological Support Services <http://londoncancer.org/media/89175/psychological-service-specification-final-2014june-.pdf> [Accessed November 2020]
 3. Macmillan Cancer Support – Impact Briefs https://www.macmillan.org.uk/_images/psychological-and-emotional-support_tcm9-283186.pdf [Accessed November 2020]
 4. The King's Fund – Long-term conditions and mental health - The cost of co-morbidities https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/field_publication_file/long-term-conditions-mental-health-cost-comorbidities-nay/or-feb12.pdf [Accessed November 2020]
 5. All.Can Patient Experience Survey. Final table of detailed results – UK November 2018
 6. London Strategic Clinical Networks – Psychological support for people living with cancer <http://www.londonscn.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/mh-cancer-commissioning-guide-062015.pdf> [Accessed November 2020]
 7. All.Can UK. 2020. Placing the psychological wellbeing of people with cancer on equal footing to physical health. (Accessed November 2020)



All.Can UK is calling on policy makers, Government, the NHS, industry and fellow patient organisations to work with us to take forward the following recommendations:⁷



1

NHS Trusts should **mandate training and increase support** so that all members of multi-disciplinary cancer teams, including Specialist Cancer Nurses and surgeons, are fully trained to the tier 2 standard of NICE's four-tier model of psychological support.

2

Following a cancer diagnosis, patients' **mental health needs should be assessed** at the earliest possible opportunity. Screening should also take place at regular milestones, including 6- and 12-months post diagnosis, so that issues can be identified and acted upon throughout and beyond a person's cancer journey.



3

NHS England, in collaboration with the patient group community, should **raise awareness within the oncology workforce** to ensure they are aware of the entire range of psychosocial interventions offered by the third sector.



4

The NHS should take steps to personalise psycho-oncology and avoid 'one size fits all' approaches in line with NHS England's ambition to increase access to personalised care. NHS staff should ensure **patient group materials are made available to oncology patients** so that they are aware of the mental health support that they can receive.



5



The Government and NHS England should work to address the regional variation in access to mental health support for patients with cancer. To support this, the **NHS Mental Health Dashboard should be expanded to include specific data on cancer and mental health conditions** so that the NHS can have a better understanding of the level of patient need for services.

7. All.Can UK. 2020. Placing the psychological wellbeing of people with cancer on equal footing to physical health. (Accessed November 2020)

About All.Can

In the UK, All.Can is a partnership between leading health charities and biopharmaceutical companies with a shared ambition for cancer patients to receive world class, patient centred care that is sustainable for the NHS to deliver.

All.Can UK is a multi-stakeholder initiative involving patient group and industry experts. In the UK, All.Can is funded by Bristol Myers Squibb (primary sponsor) and MSD (supporting sponsor). All.Can International is a not-for-profit organisation (ASBL) registered in Belgium. Its work is made possible with financial support from Bristol Myers Squibb (main sponsor), Roche (major sponsor), MSD and Johnson & Johnson (sponsors), Baxter and Illumina (contributor), with additional non-financial (in kind) support from Helpsy, Intacare and Goings-On. All.Can is a registered trade mark of All.Can International.

All.Can UK is chaired by The Patients Association, a leading national charity which is dedicated to supporting the rights and interests of all patients and their families. The initiative brings together a collaborative Working Group of health charities and biopharmaceutical companies. If you would like more information on All.Can UK, please visit our website at: <https://www.all-can.org/national-initiatives/uk/>

If you would like to work with us, please email All.Can@hanovercomms.com

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