

.....Fife Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey Service



DATE July 18

“Living with Cancer In Fife”

Welcome to our first Improving the Cancer Journey service bulletin. Fife Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) is a new service of change. Our aim is to support people affected by cancer and follows the success of the Integrated Community Cancer Care Project, developed through the Transforming Care After Treatment work (TCAT). TCAT contributed to the decision by Macmillan Cancer Support to invest £1m of funding over the next 3 years to help Fife Health and Social Care Partnership develop the “Improving Cancer Journey” service. The service sits within Adults Service, Fife Wide Division. Jacquie Stringer, Service Manager, Macmillan Cancer is leading the programme at service level and we thank her and everyone involved for your support and commitment as we look to launch this new initiative in Fife. In the meantime, we hope you find these bulletins a useful way of keeping in touch. Thank you.



Julie Paterson
Divisional General Manager
(Fife Wide)

Over 40% of people in Scotland will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime.

Around 1 in 13 men and 1 in 9 women will develop cancer before the age of 65.

The number of people being diagnosed with cancer continues to increase (Beating Cancer: Ambition and Action, 2016).

Despite current evidence, the effect that cancer has on people's emotional and mental health, receives less attention than the effects on physical wellbeing. (Mental Health Foundation, Scotland, 2018). Almost half of people with cancer identify that the emotional effects of cancer are more difficult to cope with than the physical effects (Adler, 2008).

The £1m Fife Macmillan Improving the Cancer Journey (ICJ) service will see a vast array of community partners such as housing, voluntary agencies, health, Trusts and financial support agencies working together to support people affected by cancer.

Fife Improving the Cancer Journey team is made up representatives from across these services and partners and together we carried out a scoping exercise from October 17 to March 18. This has informed the test sites and identified any gaps in service provision. The overarching themes from the engagement events and survey included:

- The need for emotional support – both for the person with a cancer diagnosis, and their family. More support needs to be available at any stage in the journey.
- Lack of communication between doctors, nurses, consultants, hospitals, across health boards – patients assume a medical professional will understand their situation, and often they don't.
- Honesty and respect for patients is hugely important, and not something everyone experiences.

The focus of our new service is to make getting practical and emotional support much quicker and more easily, right from the point of diagnosis. To do this we are working with Macmillan and all our partners across Fife, to improve the communication and ways of working between local support groups, charities, council services, GPs and many, many others.



Mary Lynch



Sharon Breeze

Key to helping people diagnosed with cancer is the support of the Local Area Co-ordinators, Mary Lynch and Sharon Breeze. Mary and Sharon are non-clinical staff who are trained on all the different types of support people affected by cancer may need. Fears people may have can include how they are going to cope financially, worries around employment or emotional stress for both themselves and the impact the diagnosis could have on their family and friends.

Our new ICJ approach started within three Fife communities in June 2018:

- Leven
- Kirkcaldy
- Cowdenbeath

Mary and Sharon will link with people diagnosed with cancer at the earliest stage to talk about what matters most to them and their family. Support includes:

- knowing where to go for practical and emotional support
- helping people deal with housing or financial concerns
- connecting people with local support services or groups, such as voluntary agencies
- advice on how to get help from health and social care services and Trusts, and;
- support for family members and carers

It is early days but the learning and feedback from families and staff from the first three service areas will help develop and improve this vital cancer support service further. This is with the aim of rolling it out across Fife by October 2018.

To find out more about our service contact

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Mary Lynch (Local Area Co-ordinator) Mary.Lynch-sw@fife.gov.uk

Sharon and Mary feature in the latest [Guest Blog on the Fife Health and Social Care](#) news pages. Check it out today.

Thank you.