

Introducing you to your clinical nurse specialist (CNS) for skin cancer

Skin Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialists:

Joseph Mazivanhanga

Melissa Arnold

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Monday to Friday, 8am – 4pm

Skin Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist:

Siobhan O'Brien

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- Monday, Tuesday and Friday, 8am – 4pm

The role of the skin clinical nurse specialist (CNS)

A CNS is a qualified nurse with the appropriate training, knowledge, skills and expertise who has specialised in skin cancer care. The CNS is trained to support your emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual needs.

The CNS helps patients to cope with a skin cancer diagnosis, providing support and guidance to patients, their families and carers. This can be at the time of diagnosis, during treatment, or at any stage throughout the cancer pathway. Sometimes it is helpful to have someone to talk to as you may have lots of questions or wish to discuss your treatment options when faced with the challenge of a cancer diagnosis.

The CNS works closely with the plastic surgery and dermatology teams and can act as a useful link between you and other team members at the Lister hospital or your local hospital.

Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)

The Multidisciplinary Team is a specialist team of health professionals who, together with you and your consultant, decide your diagnosis, care and treatment. The consultant looking after you will take responsibility for your care. The team meet weekly to review and discuss suspected or diagnosed cancers. The team will recommend and agree a treatment plan. This will be discussed with you at your next outpatient appointment.

The CNS is a member of multidisciplinary team (MDT) and also known as your key worker. This means your CNS will co-ordinate your care and can be your first point of contact. They are a part of the MDT working closely with the other healthcare professionals who look after you.

Support and information

At the time of diagnosis and afterwards, you may have lots of questions. It might help to talk them through with someone. The CNS is available to answer any questions you may have about your diagnosis and/or the proposed treatment plan. We can also provide written information on topics related to your diagnosis and treatment.

If you need help coping with your symptoms and/or side effects related to the treatment

At times, the disease or treatment may cause symptoms or side effects that can be difficult to cope with. Part of the CNS role is to provide specialist nursing advice to help try and relieve any symptoms related to your illness, and/or troublesome side effects of treatment.

Advice and liaison

The CNS team work closely with other services. If you feel you require extra support, we can refer you to:

- District nurse or community palliative Macmillan nurse
- Social worker
- Financial support/advice
- Lymphoedema service
- Other voluntary organisations

Is information about me kept confidential?

Yes. All information regarding your tests, diagnosis and treatment plan will be treated in a confidential manner. Only members of the healthcare team involved in your care will have access to information about your diagnosis and treatment. Please see our privacy notice for how we protect patient information:

<https://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/help/privacy-data-protection/>

What if I have a problem out of hours following surgery?

If you have a problem out of hours, please contact:

- The ward you were on if you have been a patient at Lister Hospital
- your GP or NHS 111
- your local Emergency Department, or
- if you are unwell as a result of your treatment, call the Mount Vernon 24-hour Acute Oncology Service detailed below

What if I feel unwell as a result of my treatment?

If at any time during your course of treatment you become unwell, you must contact one of the numbers below:

Radiotherapy Clinic Nurses:

- Telephone 0203 826 2192
- Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 6pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

Radiotherapy Clinic Radiographers:

- Telephone 0203 826 2616
- Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

Leaflet information

You can request this information in a different format or another language;
please speak to your doctor or nurse.

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