

QUESTIONS TO ASK

Your doctor or nurse will regularly ask you if you have any questions. Often when this happens you may not be able to think of anything; a way around this is to write down questions before your appointment (use the 'Notes' pages if you wish). To help you think about what you might want to ask, this section contains some questions patients have suggested.

Diagnosis

- Where is the cancer?
- Has it spread?
- What is the stage, grade and cell type of my cancer?
- Do you have any information sheets or booklets about the type of cancer I have?
- Where can I find out more?
- What kind of help and support is available to me?
- What will happen next?

Tests

- What tests will I need?
- Do you have any written information about the tests?
- What do the tests involve?
- Will I need to stay in hospital?
- Should someone come with me to the tests?
- When do I get the test results, will someone discuss the results with me?

Treatment and care

- What is the aim of treatment and how long will it take?
- Why is this treatment best for me? Are there any other options?
- How successful is the treatment likely to be? Will there be side effects?
- Do you have written information about the treatment?
- Where will I be treated?
- Will I need to stay in hospital? For how long?
- What care will I need afterwards?

- Will I be offered advice on changes I may need to make to my lifestyle?
- What is likely to happen if I choose not to have the treatment?

About surgery

- What surgery is planned?
- How long will the surgery take?
- Where and when will the surgery be done?
- What are the risks?
- How long will I be in hospital?
- How long will it be until I can drive again?

About chemotherapy and radiotherapy

- Do you have written information about the chemotherapy/radiotherapy I need?
- How long will the course of treatment take and how will the doctor know if it's working?
- How many sessions will I have and how long will each session last?
- What are the possible side effects, and how will they be treated?

Medication

- What is the medication and how will it help?
- Is it all right to take the medication with the others I am already taking?
- How do I take the medication?
- Should I avoid alcohol, certain foods, and activities such as driving when taking it?
- If I lose my hair through chemotherapy will I have to pay for a wig? (*See section regarding wigs under Support Advice*).

CANCER REGISTRATION

When someone is diagnosed with cancer, or a condition that sometimes leads to cancer, the doctor or hospital records the relevant details and are allowed by law to pass this information on to the local Cancer Registry.

Why is registration necessary?

Registration is the only way that the Cancer Registries can see how many people are getting cancer and what types of cancer they have. Registration has been running for over 50 years in the UK.

By working with cancer researchers, Cancer Registries have been able to identify the causes of some cancers. They have also been able to look at how cancer patients are treated across the UK and how successful treatments have been for different types of cancer. Registration also helps them to make sure cancer-screening programmes are working.

Registration shows whether the number of people getting cancer is going up or down so the health service can make sure the right services and staff are available in the right place.

The information registered is vital for research into cancer. Cancer registration is supported by all the main UK cancer charities.

Do I need to do anything?

You do not need to do anything – there are no forms to fill in and nothing to sign. Your hospital or doctor will pass the relevant information to your local cancer registry during your care.

What will you do with this information?

The Cancer Registries are very careful with the information and follow strict rules about how they keep it and who can use it. Reports that they publish will never identify any particular person.

Will anyone contact me?

No, no-one from the cancer registry will contact you.

Do I have a choice?

TRANSPORT AND CAR PARKING

Patients being treated in the Gloucestershire Oncology Centre

Patients are entitled to transport if they are having oncology treatment within the Oncology centre. This can be booked using the following telephone numbers:-

For patients receiving **chemotherapy** telephone 08454 224028

For patients receiving **radiotherapy** telephone 08454 224147

Patients are entitled to bring an escort with them if it is deemed medically necessary. It should be noted that hospital transport will be picking up and dropping off several patients and this can extend the travel time.

Voluntary Car Services may be another option for transport – please contact your local council for details.

Car Parking for the Oncology Centre in Cheltenham

Patients attending for treatment are entitled to
free car parking

Oncology outpatients are entitled to a free car parking permit for the duration of their treatment. The Oncology receptionist provides a form that should be taken to the FOCUS Cancer Information Centre, where a permit is issued. The Centre is open 10am-5pm Monday-Friday and if a permit is required out of these hours, the receptionist will telephone the Vinci Parking Shop (ext 4174) to log the registration plate of the vehicle until the permit is available. This protects the vehicle from a parking ticket.

Exemption permits are for the patient, not the vehicle, so can be displayed on the dashboard of any vehicle bringing the patient for treatment. The permit should be given to volunteer car drivers for display but retained by the patient at the end of the journey, to give to the next driver.

Blue Badge holders may only park free of charge in the disabled bays so it is advised that they should also apply for an exemption permit in case there isn't a disabled bay available on arrival.

Please note that the exemption permits are **only** valid in the hospital's Keynsham Road Oncology car park.

Park and Ride

There is a Park and Ride service that runs from Cheltenham Racecourse to Cheltenham General Hospital via the town centre.

Shuttle Bus

A Stagecoach Shuttlebus runs frequently between Gloucestershire Royal and Cheltenham General Hospitals. The Shuttlebus will run every half hour. It is primarily for hospital staff but is also available to the general public, usual fares apply.

Transport for patients in Powys

Cheltenham and Hereford Hospitals book ambulance transport by contacting the Ambulance service directly. To request non-emergency patient transport, patients who are registered with a Powys GP should call the Powys Local Health Board Contact Centre on 0845 840 1234 or request transport through the treating hospital. This should be done at least two working days in advance of the appointment (for example, request transport no later than Thursday for a Monday appointment). The Contact Centre is open from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Friday (excluding bank holidays). Short notice requests will be passed to the transport provider but cannot be guaranteed.

Any queries, amendments or cancellations should be directed to the organisation through which transport was booked (for example, if transport was booked through the Contact Centre it would be cancelled by ringing the Contact Centre). If your appointment is cancelled or changed please ensure the transport is also cancelled or changed as appropriate.

If you have any comments about the transport service, please ring the organisation that booked your transport. They will be able to pass comments on to the transport provider or give you details to contact them directly.

CAR PARKING AT HEREFORD COUNTY HOSPITAL

There are two main types of car parking available – Pay on Exit and Pay and Display.

Car Park – Pay on Exit

The three main car parks are barrier controlled and are all located at the front of the hospital.

Car park – Pay and Display

There are two areas of parking that remain pay and display. These are the row of spaces in front of Accident & Emergency and the area adjacent to the Fred Bulmer Building. The pay and display ticket dispensers are situated next to each of the parking areas: please ensure you use these machines only.

Car Park – Charles Renton Unit (CRU)

There are 8 designated spaces for patients opposite the CRU which are marked for disabled use. These are available to patients with poor mobility who drive themselves to the CRU.

If at any time you have a problem using the car park attendants are available to help. Please press the help button on the machines to contact them.

Car Park Concession

Concessions are in place for patients should a visit to the Charles Renton Unit exceed the two-hours local standard due to delays caused by the hospital, car parking charges will be discounted to the two hour rate. If you qualify for a concession you will be given a concession slip to complete. The slip and your car parking ticket should then be taken to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) located at the Main Entrance area. They will validate your ticket to the appropriate rate between 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Out of hours the CP Plus Attendants will validate the concessions, please contact one of the attendants within the car parks.

Frequent Parkers – patients and visitors

Frequent parkers (multiple visits in any one week) will qualify for a discount equivalent to the cost of the shortest stay in respect of any five visits in a seven-day period. The concession requires receipts from the new payment machines or Pay and Display tickets to be retained for proof of the cost.

Help with health costs – for patients

Further support is available to those on low-income from the national scheme. Details are available on 08701 555455, or you can pick up an information leaflet, ref HC11, at the main Hospital reception. This scheme incorporates a range of assistance for a variety of health service costs.

Hospital travel costs schemes – for patients and escorts

This scheme supports costs incurred (where ambulance or ambulance car transport is not available) in transport and parking costs of patient visits to hospital.

The qualifications for support are those claiming:

Income Support

Income-based Job-Seekers' Allowance

Guaranteed Pension Credit

People requiring treatment for a condition related to their time in the Armed Forces

HC2 Certificate Holder

Tax Credits

It is important that you bring up to date (current year) proof of entitlement to each appointment, together with your hospital number. The trust is unable to reimburse costs without this information.

Disabled Drivers

Winged parking spaces for disabled drivers will remain outside the main entrance, but the spaces are not subject to blue badge exemption. Those who qualify will have access to the above concessions.

PHLEBOTOMY SERVICES

(Blood tests)

For patients on chemotherapy, blood tests are taken prior to treatment to make sure patients are suitable to receive chemotherapy. These blood tests can be carried out in hospital but there are also some doctors' surgeries that offer this service. Please contact your local surgery to see if this is possible.

MEDICATIONS

Overleaf is a section for you to keep a note of all the tablets or medicines that you are taking if you wish to do so. This does not include chemotherapy treatments as these can be complex.

If there are changes to your tablets they also need to be recorded on this list so that it is kept up to date. Please ask your doctor or nurse to do this for you. If tablets or medications are stopped, cross them off the list and if you know, state the reason why they were stopped.

NOTE FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS REGARDING MEDICATIONS

This list is the patient's record of medications. It is not a substitute for the clinical record. All changes to medications must be recorded in the patient's notes and the appropriate prescription provided.

Please do not use this list to prescribe medication or order repeat prescriptions.

