

Evidence Brief: Cancer Support Workers and Co-ordinators

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Key publications – the big picture

NHS Long Term Workforce Plan

NHS, June 2023

Support workers, both clinical and administrative, are an important part of wider multidisciplinary teams, enabling more effective and efficient working. They contribute to addressing critical workforce capacity constraints while providing high quality, personalised care to patients. These include assistant practitioner and technician roles, such as occupational therapy assistants, which can be key integrators across health and social care. There will be a continued focus on supporting the recruitment and retention of these groups, including:

- maternity support workers through the Competency, Education and Career Development Framework [226](#)
- AHP support workers, through growth of apprenticeships and the development of a Competency, Education and Career Development Framework [227](#)
- healthcare support workers, through the NHS England programme [228](#) (recruitment, induction and career pathways)
- cancer support workers, through the ACCEND (Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development) programme. [229](#)

Building a cancer workforce that delivers for patients today and tomorrow

Cancer Research UK, May 2023

This policy statement aims to understand the current challenges facing the cancer workforce, as well as some of the short- and long-term solutions. Desk-based research, insights from CRUK internal research as well as engagement with key stakeholders including cancer charities, professional bodies and the NHS, all feed into the scoping and policy recommendations laid out in the

report. The recommendations focus on key considerations for the NHS LTWP, as well as wider changes which could ensure we are using the cancer workforce as effectively as possible to deliver for cancer patients today and tomorrow.

Workforce development framework for care co-ordinators

NHS England, February 2023

This Workforce development framework for care co-ordinators has been developed to:

- set clear and consistent standards for care co-ordinators
- demonstrate the benefits of care co-ordinators working in health and care
- provide information about the training, support, supervision, and continuing professional development (CPD) needed to enable care co-ordinators to succeed
- support the development of a strong and capable workforce of care co-ordinators
- support improved quality and consistency of care co-ordination and reduce variation in outcomes and access standards.

The framework includes competencies for the role and links to resources to support employers to recruit and embed care co-ordinators in services. Organisations employing care co-ordinators, including primary care networks, can use this framework to support recruitment and retention. It will help them develop a greater understanding of the role, its scope of practice and the training and development care co-ordinators need to enable them to practice safely and effectively.

Quarter Two Report – July/ August/ September – October 2022

Greater Manchester Cancer and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care, 2022

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This report details progress reporting for quarter two (Q2) against agreed output measures along with additional outcomes and is relevant for key stakeholders involved with the pilot. For the purposes of this report, when referring to Cancer Care Coordinators (CCCs) we are referring to the 9 as part of this Primary Care Network pilot unless specifically stated otherwise.

Quarter One Report – April/ May 2022-August 2022

Greater Manchester Cancer and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care, 2022

The Greater Manchester (GM) Cancer Alliance are piloting the role of the Cancer Care Coordinator (CCC) across nine Primary Care Networks to support new ways of working. This is an 18-month pilot in collaboration with the GM Workforce Collaborative, Health Education England (HEE) and Macmillan. The quarterly report will monitor agreed output measures and report on additional outcomes throughout the course of the pilot. The report will be relevant for key stakeholders involved with the pilot. For the purposes of this report, when referring to Cancer Care Coordinators (CCCs) we are referring to the 9 as part of this Primary Care Network pilot unless specifically stated otherwise. Baseline data has been obtained for the Q1 report and is under analysis by the GM Business Intelligence team, we aim to report on the baseline data in the Q2 report.

Cancer nursing on the line: why we need urgent investment across the UK

Macmillan, 2021

The cancer workforce and people living with cancer don't need warm words of thanks or sympathy from governments. They need action. That must start with supporting and recruiting the cancer workforce the UK needs.

<https://wessexcanceralliance.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UHS-LWBC-Support-Worker-Portfolio.pdf>

Cancer services recovery plan

NHS, December 2020

The coronavirus pandemic has presented major challenges for all healthcare systems. One of the most significant impacts was a sharp reduction in the number of people coming forward and being referred urgently with suspected cancer and referred from screening programmes. When coronavirus prevalence was at its highest at the start of the pandemic, this resulted in some people facing longer waits for diagnosis, some treatments being delivered in different ways or being interrupted or stopped on the grounds of clinical safety, and some follow-up care being disrupted.

See p. 18 "Cancer alliance will support clinical nurse specialists to work at the top of their licence by deploying an effective skill mix model, including cancer support worker and volunteer roles."

Estimating the cost of growing the NHS cancer workforce in England by 2029

Cancer Research UK, October 2020

Over the last 50 years, the UK has made significant progress in improving survival outcomes for people diagnosed with cancer. In the 1970s, only 1 in 4 cancer patients would survive their disease for ten years or more. By 2010, this had risen to 2 in 4, and survival outcomes continue to improve.¹ There are several drivers for this, from the introduction of screening programmes and innovative treatments to ongoing improvements to health care pathways –all of which has been underpinned by the continued and tireless efforts of staff from across the NHS.

We are the NHS: People Plan 2020/21 – action for us all

NHS, July 2020

This plan sets out actions to support transformation across the whole NHS. It focuses on how we must all continue to look after each other and foster a culture of inclusion and belonging, as

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well as action to grow our workforce, train our people, and work together differently to deliver patient care. The principles underpinning the action through 2020/21 must endure beyond that time.

See p. 43 "Increasing local recruitment: Employers must increase their recruitment to roles such as clinical support workers and, in doing so, highlight the importance of these roles for patients and other healthcare workers as well as potential career pathways to other registered roles."

Key Worker Policy to support people living with cancer

East Midlands Cancer Alliance, June 2020

See section 8.1 The Role of a Cancer Support Worker

8.1 The Role of a Cancer Support Worker/ Cancer Navigator in supporting a Key Worker

The term Cancer Support Workers (CSW) is used in this document however it also includes the roles of Cancer Navigators. CSW's often work as part of the cancer care team alongside registered practitioners, usually a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS). They can support with delegated non-complex tasks to enable the CNS to focus their expertise on managing the complex care needs of people affected by cancer at different points of the pathway:

- being investigated for a cancer diagnosis
- receiving treatment for their cancer
- living with and beyond cancer following treatment

NHS Long Term Plan

NHS, January 2019

The NHS Long Term Plan was developed in partnership with those who know the NHS best – frontline health and care staff, patients and their families and other experts.

See pp. 56-61 for "Cancer" including "all patients, including those with secondary cancers, will have access to the right expertise

and support, including a Clinical Nurse Specialist or other support worker." p. 61

One size doesn't fit all: why we need to make cancer care more personal in the NHS

Macmillan, 2019

Every year nearly 300,000 people in England receive a life changing diagnosis of cancer and we know that in the coming years the number of people living with cancer in England will rise from 2,000,000 today to 3,400,000 by 2030.

Strategic Framework for Cancer Workforce: Interim working paper (phase 2)

Health Education England, July 2018

In July 2018, the NHS was tasked with developing the Long Term Plan (LTP) setting out how the service intends to deliver major improvements in key areas including transforming cancer care. This was followed by a multi-year workforce plan – the interim People Plan.

NHS England and Health Education England should encourage providers to work with Macmillan Cancer Support and other charities to develop and evaluate the role of support workers in enabling more patient centred care to be provide (p. 35)

The expansion of Clinical Support Workers (CNSs) (Macmillan pilot to free up senior CNS time in oncology, so that we can support oncologists in an increasingly complex role that relies on connections between many disciplines and organisations) could release valuable oncologist time and productivity (p. 54)

Thinking Differently: Macmillan's vision for the future cancer workforce in England

Macmillan, February 2017

See pp. 20-21 "Trained support workers are another new role Macmillan has been exploring. These roles work alongside registered practitioners to support people with cancer who have

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non-complex needs. While the specifics vary, the overall aim of their role remains the same: to offer the right post-treatment support to patients at the right time, and to support people to manage their own care. For instance, support workers can coordinate care or provide a single point of access in order to allow patients to easily re-enter the system when they need to. In addition, they can provide appropriate advice and escalate any issues to a specialist where necessary. The role, which is focused on a partnership with the patient, allows the support worker to empower the patient to self-manage – which is ever more important as people live longer with the consequences of cancer treatment.”

[Cancer Workforce Plan – Phase 1: Delivering the cancer strategy to 2021](#)

Health Education England, 2017

In it we set out the key developments to increase supply through speciality training, to create new routes into the cancer workforce and to upskill existing staff. See also [Cancer Workforce Plan – Phase 1 progress update](#)

[Cancer workforce in England: a census of cancer, palliative care and chemotherapy specialty nurses and support workers in England](#)

Macmillan, 2017

See p. 66 for numbers on “Cancer Support Workers”

This section describes the cancer support workers workforce in England. To be included in this report the posts had to be on Agenda for Change Bands 3 to 4, and the post holders had to spend over 50% of their time directly supporting adult cancer patients. This means many administrative roles and Band 2 support workers and healthcare assistants have not been included in these numbers.

See also [Considering the numbers](#) May 2018, British Journal of Nursing”

[Indicative role specification for a Macmillan Cancer Support Worker – care coordination](#)

Source: Macmillan

Publication date: August 2011

Purpose: Macmillan has developed an indicative role specification to outline the tasks, skills, knowledge and behaviours required, which are transferable across the UK and across all care settings. This has been based on Agenda for Change National Job Profiles Band 4 and Skills for Health Core Standards for Assistant Practitioners. The purpose is to set the minimum standard for all Cancer Support Worker posts. Additional content can be added to this role specification according to local requirements. So this is the minimum expected of the role rather than an exhaustive list of everything a Macmillan Cancer Support Worker might undertake.

Blog posts

[Blog: a review of the cancer nursing and AHP workforce within a district general hospital](#)

BMJ Evidence-Based Nursing, 18 December 2022

In May 2021 I was successful in starting the next part of my nursing leadership journey by commencing as a Florence Nightingale Foundation leadership scholar. Then in September 2021, after nearly 25 years at the same trust, the scholarship gave me the confidence to look outside my comfort zone and I started as the Lead Cancer Nurse at a district general hospital (DGH); a trust which had been part of a merger 10 years previously.

[Celebrating our Cancer Support Workers](#)

NHS Wessex Cancer Alliance

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Wessex Cancer Alliance and Macmillan Cancer Support are delighted to be celebrating 10 years since the first cancer support worker was recruited in Wessex. The Cancer Support Worker role has developed so much over the last decade and is now embedded in each hospital Trust across Wessex, with over 60 CSW's in our Alliance. We want to say an enormous thank you to all the cancer support workers who are supporting cancer patients every day, in our hospitals and the community.

[Spotlight on the vital role support workers play in care of cancer patients](#)

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance, 16 August 2021
Cheshire & Merseyside Cancer Alliance is putting the spotlight on the important role that support workers play in helping patients through their cancer journey.

The alliance's latest in-depth blog looking at CMCA's projects and services highlights Cancer Support Workers, also called Cancer Navigators, who help to guide patients through their experience of cancer, from diagnosis to aftercare.

Course

[Principles of Cancer Care Programme](#)

Cheshire and Merseyside Cancer Alliance

The Principles of Cancer Care Programme (PCCP) is delivered to groups of 14 on a virtual platform and offers you the opportunity to share and learn with others working in similar roles. The course is suitable for all healthcare staff working in a supportive/assistive role who are working with people affected by cancer or who may have a potential cancer diagnosis.

The PCCP is aligned to the capabilities in practice within the [ACCEND education framework](#) and is ideal for those who have completed the e-learning Foundations of Cancer Care

course and wish to enhance their knowledge within their current role (The Foundations of Cancer Care course can be found on the [NHS Learning Hub](#)).

Case Studies

[A day in the life of... a cancer pathway coordinator - North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust](#)

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust, October 2024
Emma Hall is a cancer pathway coordinator in the team, supporting patients undergoing investigations for colorectal cancers.

We sat down with Emma to find out a little more about the vital work she does in her role.

[How delivering personalised care in cancer impacts patients](#) NHS South, Central and West

Evaluating the impact of personalised care in cancer pilots for the Peninsula Cancer Alliance to support them to become ongoing commissioned services.

[Macmillan teams up with hospital trust to invest £824k in specialist cancer care](#)

South Tees NHS, 2022

In a further boost to cancer care, the trust is also piloting a new internship programme which offers specialist cancer training to nurses already working across its hospitals.

This has been made possible thanks to a £50,000 grant from Health Education England and places are already being advertised internally.

[Expansion of cancer support service to help people navigate their cancer journey](#)

Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System, 1 August 2022

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From today (1 August), twelve Cancer Care Navigators will be based in the three acute hospitals in our area working alongside Clinical Nurse Specialists to help and support people affected by cancer with their non-clinical needs.

Cancer Care Navigators will work in collaboration with cancer clinical nurse specialists and existing supporting teams to ensure people receive practical and emotional support throughout and beyond their cancer diagnosis.

Supporting people living with cancer

RCN Magazine, 21 January 2022

As soon as she started working on the urology outpatient department at the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, Jenny Chatfield knew her role as a cancer care navigator was right for her. The knowledge she'd developed over 25 years of working in the NHS, including 14 years working with urology cancer patients, went hand in hand with her new position.

Supporting people to live well with and beyond breast cancer

NHS Long Term Plan, January 2019

University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust work with a range of agencies to provide personalised follow-up care that aims to reduce the impact of cancer and its treatment on people's health and wellbeing. Felicity Farah, describes how this support has helped her following her diagnosis of breast cancer in March 2018.

Macmillan Nurse Consultant-Breast Cancer Berkshire Cancer Centre

Health Education England South East

The Berkshire Cancer Centre in Reading is one of two cancer centres in the Thames Valley Cancer Alliance area/region providing cancer services to people across Berkshire and areas of South Oxfordshire. Breast Care is the largest service within the Centre and the number of patients has increased over the

last five years with 555 patients diagnosed with new primary breast cancer in 2021. In addition, there are approximately 211 patients with metastatic breast cancer in the overall Cancer Nurse Specialist (CNS) caseload.

Jessica Turner – Radiology Support Worker

Health Education England

Jessica is a Radiology Support Worker at Birmingham Children's Hospital. Read below her thoughts and experiences of working as an AHP support worker.

My role is very varied as I work across all areas of radiology, so each day is different. In each area I undertake a multitude of clinical and administrative tasks and support the radiographers and sonographers in any way I can.

Support Worker: Impact Brief

Macmillan

Macmillan Support Workers work as part of the cancer care team alongside registered practitioners to improve care for people with cancer. They work with other professionals and provide support by dealing with non complex tasks to allow registered practitioners to focus their expertise on managing the complex care needs. They provide coordination of care to people mostly after cancer treatment, who can be enabled to self-manage their own care with support, with open access back to the MDT.

The Healthcare Support Workforce: a case for ongoing development and investment

Skills for Health, 2015

See p. 18 Velindre Cancer Care

Velindre Cancer Centre initially developed a Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) role within chemotherapy services to support nurses in its mobile cancer care unit, which helps to deliver treatment closer to patients' homes. 19 The Centre recognised that the HCSW role could have a greater impact if it

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was expanded to include administrative and organisational as well as clinical and communication responsibilities. It would enable Band 6 nurses to spend less time preparing chemotherapy clinics and more time working with patients, improving the level of clinical care that they could provide.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in the **Cancer** section of [the Star](#)

Statistics

You can find relevant statistics on the [Health and Care Statistics Landscape](#) under “**Health and Care**” and use the “**Cancer**” filter

National Data Programme

Workforce, Training and Education staff can look at the [WT&E Data and Analytics Service](#) resources including the National Data Warehouse SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Cost and time savings

[Support workers have helped free up time for cancer nurses to transform care](#) Abstract only*
Cancer Nursing Practice 20(5), 2021

Macmillan Cancer Support’s investment in 43 support workers has improved quality of service.

A new cancer support worker role is saving clinical nurse specialists about two hours daily and improving services to patients, an evaluation has found.

[Cancer care coordinators to improve tamoxifen persistence in breast cancer: how heterogeneity in baseline prognosis impacts on cost-effectiveness](#) Abstract only*

Value in Health 19(8), December 2016

We investigated the cost-effectiveness of a CCC across eight breast cancer subtypes, defined by progesterone receptor (PR) status, human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2) status, and local/regional spread. These subtypes range from excellent to poorer prognoses. The CCC helped in improving tamoxifen persistence by providing information, checking-in by phone, and “troubleshooting” concerns.

Covid-19

[Exploring the impact of Covid-19 on the psychological well-being of oncology healthcare professionals](#) Abstract only*

Journal of Advanced Nursing 79(10), May 2023

To explore how psychological well-being is maintained by healthcare professionals (HCPs) employed in a cancer setting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Patient Experience and Care

[Factors affecting cancer care delivery in primary care: a qualitative study](#)

Family Practice 42(1), 2025

One role of primary care is to support people living with and beyond cancer, the number of whom is increasing worldwide. This study aimed to identify factors affecting cancer care

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provision within English primary care after the start of the coronavirus pandemic, during high healthcare service demand, and a depleted workforce.

[Evaluation of a city-wide physical activity pathway for people affected by cancer: the Active Everyday service](#)

Supportive Care in Cancer 31(101), 2023

Purpose: The primary goal of this article is to present an evaluation of a UK-based city-wide physical activity pathway for patients with a cancer diagnosis, the Active Everyday service. Active Everyday was a co-produced physical activity service for people affected by cancer. The service was underpinned by a behaviour change care pathway model developed by Macmillan Cancer Support charity.

[Efficacy of the Breast Cancer Navigator role in reducing distress in newly diagnosed breast cancer patients: a pilot study](#)

Journal of Oncology Navigation Survivorship 9(5), May 2018

Few primary studies have examined the effect of early intervention by a Breast Navigator Nurse program on distress. We tested the effects of an early intervention by the BCN on distress. A secondary interest was how an early intervention might change practices.

[Impact of breast cancer care RN-coordinator program on patients' distress level](#)

Canadian Oncology Nursing Journal 28(4), 2018

The purpose of this study was to determine whether patients receiving navigation supportive care from a Breast Cancer Care Coordinator (BCCC), prior to initial oncology consultation at a British Columbia Cancer Agency, Abbotsford Centre (BCCA-AC), demonstrated different levels of anxiety and depression from those not receiving such support at the same BCCA centre.

[An evaluation of the role of support workers in lung cancer](#)

Cancer Nursing Practice 14(1), February 2015

Despite the evolution of support roles in other areas of nursing practice, the use of unregistered practitioners like Support Workers (SW) to support the lung cancer nurse specialist (LCNS) is new. No evaluations of such roles exist. Aim: To evaluate how SWs are being implemented in the UK to support LCNSs.

[An evaluation report of the nurse navigator services for the breast cancer support program](#)

Cancer Oncology Nursing Journal 25(4), 2015

The purpose of this quality improvement project was to evaluate the effectiveness of breast cancer care support provided by breast cancer care navigators (BCCN) for women attending the breast health clinic (BHC). This evaluative process examined patients' satisfaction with the nurse navigator program that focused on addressing breast cancer patients' informational needs, emotional support, and guidance through the cancer trajectory.

Reviews

[Is care really shared? A systematic review of collaborative care \(shared care\) interventions for adult cancer patients with depression](#)

BMC Health Services Research 19:120, 2019

The aim of this systematic review was to identify components, delivery and roles and responsibilities within collaborative interventions for depression in the context of cancer. Methods: Medline, PsycINFO, CINAHL, Embase, Cochrane Library and Central Register for Controlled Trials databases were searched to identify studies of randomised controlled trials comparing a treatment intervention that met the definition of collaborative model of depression care with usual care or other control condition. Studies of adult cancer patients with major depression

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or a non-bipolar depressive disorder published in English between 2005 and January 2018 were included. Cochrane checklist for risk of bias was completed (Study Prospero registration: CRD42018086515).

[Patient navigators for people with chronic disease: a systematic review](#)

PLoS One 20;13(2), 2018

The objective of this review was to summarize the evidence for patient navigator programs in people with a broad range of chronic diseases, compared to usual care. Methods: We searched MEDLINE, EMBASE, CENTRAL, CINAHL, PsycINFO, and Social Work Abstracts from inception to August 23, 2017. We also searched the reference lists of included articles. We included original reports of randomized controlled trials of patient navigator programs compared to usual care for adult and pediatric patients with any one of a defined set of chronic diseases

Role scope

[Cardio-Oncology Program Building: A Practical Guide](#) Abstract only*

Cardiology Clinics 43(1), 2025

In this article, we summarize the core components of a contemporary cardio-oncology program, including its core members (cardiologists, oncologists, clinical pharmacists, advanced practice providers, nurses, and coordinators), key services (risk assessment, treatment planning, cardiac imaging, intervention, and management), and practical integration within the health care system.

[Holistic needs assessments: considerations for effective delivery](#)

Abstract only*

Cancer Nursing Practice 23(3), April 2024

Holistic needs assessments (HNAs) are interventions used by clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) and other members of the cancer team to deliver personalised care to people living with cancer. HNAs have been used since the launch of the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative in 2007, with many cancer services embedding them in routine patient care. However, shortcomings in HNA delivery remain, notably in terms of the number of people who receive them. This article prompts nurses to reflect on how HNAs can be effectively delivered to all patients with cancer as and when they need them. The author discusses the principles of personalised cancer care, the benefits of HNAs and when, where, how and by whom HNAs should be carried out. Recommendations to support nurses in cancer settings to increase and improve HNA delivery include CNSs, cancer support workers and allied health professionals joining forces and collaboration between secondary and primary care teams.

[Scope of practice, role legitimacy, and role potential for Cancer Care Coordinators](#)

Asia-Pacific Journal of Oncology Nursing 6(4), 2019

Publication date: October 2019

The cancer care coordinator (CCC) role has become a priority in providing coordinated, patient-centered, supported care for patients, and their families experiencing cancer. The CCC role exists with heterogeneity across tumor streams, clinical disciplines, and institutions. This study explored CCCs perceptions and experiences of their role, scope of practice, and potential for future role development.

[Expertise, advocacy and activism – a qualitative study on the activities of prostate cancer peer support workers](#)

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Health: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of Health, Illness and Medicine 24(1), 2018

Peer support workers are now working with patients in a variety of settings, coming into close contact and even work alongside health professionals. Despite the potentially influential position peer support workers hold in relation to those engaged in support activities, their role, duties and their relationship to peers and health professionals lack clarity and is often defined by other actors. This study explores how peer support workers interpret and define the activities, responsibilities and knowledge associated with their work.

[Health professionals involved in cancer care coordination: Nature of the role and scope of practice](#) Abstract only*

Collegian 25(4), August 2018

The aim of this study was to determine the location and scope of practice of health professionals involved in cancer care coordination in Victoria, Australia.

[Role of care co-ordinators in cancer clinical nurse specialist teams](#) Abstract only*

Cancer Nursing Practice 15(3), February 2016

Christine Barber explores how having the two skill-sets working together offers patients a much better service. Strategic interest in the skill mix of the healthcare workforce has acknowledged the increasingly important role of non-registered staff, with care for cancer patients provided by teams comprising clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) at bands 6 and 7 and care co-ordinators at bands 3 and 4. This article outlines the development and role of care co-ordinators in cancer CNS teams in Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, using the example of a gynaecological oncology care co-ordinator as a case study.

[Giving a helping hand to cancer survivors](#) Abstract only*

Cancer Nursing Practice 15(4), 2016

The support worker's role in cancer care is valuable, but its scope, criteria and training requirements should be clearer. Many services have employed, or are looking to recruit, non-registered staff to support clinical teams in managing the growing number of cancer survivors.

Role Specification

[Specifications for the Macmillan cancer support worker](#) Abstract only*

British Journal of Healthcare Assistants 11(12), December 2017
Macmillan has developed a role specification to outline the tasks, skills, knowledge and behaviours required, transferable across the UK and across all care settings. This has been based on Agenda for Change National Job Profiles Band 4 and Skills for Health Core Standards for Assistant Practitioners. The purpose is to set the minimum standard for all cancer support workers. This is the minimum expected of the role, rather than an exhaustive list.

Training

[Teaching Cancer Care Navigators what to say, when they don't know what to say: Remote psychological support training in a time of Covid](#)

Clinical Psychology Forum (337), 2021

This paper explores the effectiveness of delivering solution-focused communication skills training and supervision to cancer care navigators (CCNs) in improving their ability and confidence to have difficult conversations with cancer patients in relation to treatment being affected due to Covid-19.

Workforce

[Cancer Workforce Fund launched to address oncology workforce crisis](#) Full text available with NHS OpenAthens account*

The Lancet Oncology, 25(5), May 2024

On April 4, 2024, the European Cancer Community Foundation [launched](#) the Cancer Workforce Fund to resource frontline projects across Europe and the UK, to help alleviate the strain on staff working in oncology services. The goal of the Fund is to identify meaningful solutions to the staffing crisis in cancer services across Europe, which has worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Competency Frameworks

[ACCEND framework](#)

Health Education England, 2023

This Career Pathway, Core Cancer Capabilities in Practice (CiP) and Education Framework for the Nursing and Allied Health Professions Workforce (the 'Framework') has been developed as part of a UK wide programme called the Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development programme (ACCEND).

The ACCEND programme aims to provide transformational reform for the career pathways and associated education, training, learning and development opportunities for the workforce providing care to people affected by cancer.

[Career Pathways and Education Framework for Cancer Nursing](#)

Royal College of Nursing (RCN), March 2022

This Framework promotes a consistent, inclusive and flexible approach to learning and development focused on a career pathway for general and specialist cancer care for the nursing

workforce. It is aspirational and values previous learning and existing knowledge and skills.

This guidance is for:

- pre-registration nursing students
- nursing support/support workers providing care to people affected by cancer in general settings and to adults in specialist cancer services
- registered nursing associates providing care to people affected by cancer in general settings and to adults in specialist cancer services
- registered nurses providing care to people affected by cancer in general settings
- registered nurses providing care to adults affected by cancer in specialist cancer service.

[Appendix 2: Competency Framework – Cancer Care Coordinator](#)
Wessex Cancer Alliance, 2022

A competency framework is a structure, which sets out and attempts to define the key knowledge, skills and behaviours required for an individual to be able to perform a particular task or job. Pathway Navigators, Cancer Care Coordinators and Cancer Support Worker roles, job titles and day-to-day tasks vary depending on local context, including organisation function, peoples' existing skills and local population need. There is no 'one size fits all' and whilst flexibility and variation to meet local need is appropriate and expected in job roles this competency framework seeks to articulate some common generic 'threads', to promote consistency. These competencies have been taken and amalgamated from several documents.

[Cancer Support Worker Competency Framework](#)

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, 2019

Cancer Support Workers work as part of the cancer care team alongside registered practitioners to improve care for people with

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cancer. They work with other professionals supporting patients with non-complex needs to allow registered practitioners to focus their expertise on managing more complex clinical care. They provide coordination of care to people affected by cancer, from the point of diagnosis, throughout treatment and beyond. They seek to enable people affected by cancer to self-manage their own care and optimise their quality of life with support.

[A competency framework for nurses providing care to people with breast cancer](#)

Royal College of Nursing, August 2019

Cancer is often considered to be a life-limiting illness, but is viewed increasingly as a long-term condition involving the individual with cancer, their family and carers. Enabling self-care and rehabilitation are viewed as a crucial component in developing future services. Health care services need to respond creatively to cancer strategies in the four UK countries to meet patients' needs. This framework defines the standards of care expected for a competent registered nurse providing general breast cancer care or specialist breast cancer care. This publication is supported by a grant from Roche Products Limited.

See p. 51 "Career Framework Level 2 – Indicative or Reference title: Support Worker"

[Core Competency Framework: For Band 4 Support Workers Caring for Adult Patients with a Cancer](#)

East of England Cancer Alliance, January 2019

A competency framework describes the range of knowledge, skills and performance levels required to help staff provide safe, effective and consistent practice all to the highest standards. The aim of this document is to support the recruitment of Band 4 Cancer Support Worker roles funded as part of the east of England Cancer Alliance Living with & Beyond Cancer Transformation Programme.

[Care Navigation: a competency framework](#)

Health Education England, 2016

The word 'navigator' derives from Latin navis - 'ship' - and agere - 'drive' - meaning 'a person who steers a ship'. Charting stormy uncertain seas requires good navigation – with purpose and direction. Similarly, most people at some point in their life may benefit from 'navigation' through encounters with different health services, agencies and professionals, across an often confusing seascape of health, social and community care. And it's not just an issue for service users, there is broad consensus from healthcare professionals that such systems can be complex and difficult to navigate.

[The Cancer Support Worker Portfolio](#)

Southampton University NHS Hospitals Trust

First and foremost, this resource is about helping you as a Cancer Support Worker (CSW) to understand and recognise the opportunities and boundaries of your role. It aims to help you record the key skills and competencies that will enable you to be a safe, person-centred practitioner, working as part of a team to deliver high-quality, ethical and non-discriminatory care to patients and their families.

*Help accessing articles or papers

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