

Specialist Palliative Care Referral Guidelines

1 Introduction

These guidelines are to support the referral pathway to the Specialist Palliative Care (SPC) teams. The Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch ([University Hospitals Dorset](#)) SPC service accepts referrals from doctors, nurses and other health and social care professionals. Self-referrals from patients or families are also accepted as agreed in the East Dorset Specialist Palliative Care Review (2011); further information will usually be sought from the clinician with primary clinical responsibility for the patient (the GP for patients in the community).

The Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch SPC service covers patients in:

- Poole Hospital
- The Royal Bournemouth Hospital
- Forest Holme Hospice, Poole
- The Macmillan Unit, Christchurch
- Patients in the following catchment area (must be registered with local GP):
 - Poole
 - Wimborne
 - Sandford, Wareham and The Isle of Purbeck
 - Bournemouth
 - Christchurch
 - [Highcliffe](#)
 - Ferndown
 - Verwood
 - South-West Hampshire (Ringwood Medical Centre, Twin Oaks Medical Centre, Cornerways Medical Centre)
- The community hospitals of Alderney, Wimborne, Swanage and St Ann's also lie within the catchment area.

2 Purpose/Policy Statement

This document was created in light of the merger of the Poole and Bournemouth/Christchurch Specialist Palliative Care services and the subsequent creation of University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust. It is based on, and supersedes: (1) Guidance for referral of people with progressive life limiting illness to the Poole Specialist Palliative Care Service (2) The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHSFT Specialist Palliative Care Referral Guidelines.

3. Definitions

This document is guidance for referral to the Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch SPC service.

Abbreviations used:

SPC – Specialist Palliative Care

HPCT – Hospital Specialist Palliative Care Team

CPCT – Community Specialist Palliative Care Team

EOLC – End of Life Care

5. Procedures

5.1 Who can refer

Any doctor, nurse or other health and social care professional. Self-referrals from patients and families are also accepted as agreed in the East Dorset Specialist Palliative Care Review (2011).

5.2 Criteria for referral to the service

Patients should meet ALL of the following criteria for referral:

- a) The patient is aged 18 or over. *For patients under the age of 18 who are in the process of transitioning to adult services and who require SPC input, please telephone the service and ask to speak to a Palliative Medicine Consultant.
- b) The patient is either:
 - i. An inpatient in Poole Hospital or The Royal Bournemouth Hospital or in the community hospitals of Alderney, Wimborne, Swanage or St Ann's
 - ii. OR is living in the catchment area described in the introductory section (Section 1) and is registered with a GP within that catchment area
- c) The patient agrees to the referral (except in cases where the patient lacks the capacity to understand and consent to referral and when the referral is judged to be in their best interests)
- d) The patient has an advanced, progressive, life limiting illness OR there is considerable uncertainty regarding their potential for recovery (examples of this may include awaiting transplant and life threatening conditions caused by a sudden, catastrophic event)
- e) The patient has **complex**** needs in one of the following domains:
 - i. Symptom control
 - ii. Psychological support
 - iii. Carer or social issues that **significantly** impact on the patient's physical or psychological state
 - iv. Where it is anticipated that grief may be complex, for instance young families, past history of complicated grief etc

**** Complex problems are defined as those which are severe and intractable and have persisted after competent palliative care by generalists** (NICE guidance: "Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer" 2004).

5.3 When to refer

Dependent on the patient and family's needs – this could be from diagnosis or at any stage thereafter, when an initial plan of care has been tried, but the patient is not improving, coping or maintaining as good a quality of life as possible. If the patient is already known to SPC or has been known to SPC services in the past, this can be checked by accessing the Palliative Care Record on EPR (note they may have been discharged from SPC follow up previously).

5.4 What the SPC service does not provide

- a) Admissions to Forest Holme Hospice or The Macmillan Unit, Christchurch for respite care
- b) Admissions to Forest Holme Hospice or The Macmillan Unit, Christchurch for long term care. Neither hospice has Continuing Health Care funded beds.
- c) Practical nursing care for patients in the community (including administration of medication or provision/assessment of packages of care)
- d) Review of patients whose disease is stable/non-progressive and who are facing long term disability rather than deterioration/death

If you are unsure if your patient meets the criteria for referral then please discuss with a member of the team. The team may **still be able** to give telephone advice for patients who do not meet all of the referral criteria.

5.5 How to refer

How to refer depends on where the patient is at the time of referral. For patients in the acute hospital, it is sometimes more appropriate for the patient to be seen by the CPCT once they are discharged, rather than by the HPCT.

Poole Hospital

The Poole HPCT can be contacted for referrals or advice between the hours of 08:30 – 17.00 Monday to Friday via ext 8102 or bleep 0830/0028.

At weekends and overnight the SPC service can be contacted for advice via 0300 019 8115. Clinical Nurse Specialist advice is available between the hours of 09.00 – 17.00 at weekends; overnight calls will go through to the specialist inpatient unit who can advise. Senior medical advice is available from the Specialist Palliative Care Consultant on call via switch board.

Referrals are accepted via:

- Telephone (ext 8102)
- Bleep (0830/0028)
- Referral form - this can be emailed to forest.holme@uhd.nhs.uk (however bleep or phone call preferred)

Royal Bournemouth Hospital

The RBH HPCT can be contacted for referrals or advice between the hours of 08:00 – 16:00, 7 days a week. Outside of these hours the on-call consultant can be contacted via switchboard

For new referrals please ensure that a referral form is completed and emailed to hpct@uhd.nhs.uk

For patients who are already known to the Specialist Palliative Care Team, referrals are accepted via:

- Telephone (ext 6021 (from outside: 03000 19 6021))
- Bleep (2546)
- Referral form
- Email – hpct@uhd.nhs.uk

Poole CPCT

The Poole CPCT covers GP surgeries based in:

- Poole
- Wimborne
- Sandford, Wareham and The Isle of Purbeck

The community hospitals of Alderney, Wimborne, Swanage and St Ann's also lie within the Poole CPCT catchment area. As St Ann's and Alderney are close to the border with the Bournemouth and Christchurch CPCT service, patients requiring a SPC assessment in these hospitals who are likely to be discharged back to the Bournemouth and Christchurch community catchment area in the near future, may instead be referred to that service. Please note the DHUFT palliative and end of life care advanced nurse practitioners also provide generalist palliative care support for the community hospitals.

SPC advice is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Telephone number: 0300 019 8115

Clinical Nurse Specialist advice is available between the hours of 08:30 – 17.00 (09.00-17.00 at weekends)

Outside of these hours the call will go through to the specialist inpatient unit ([Forest Holme Hospice](#)) who can advise.

Referrals are accepted by:

- e-mail to forest.holme@uhd.nhs.uk
- telephone
- referral form

- letter (referrers should be aware that this can introduce significant delays to the referral process)

Bournemouth and Christchurch CPCT

The Bournemouth and Christchurch CPCT covers GP surgeries based in:

- Bournemouth
- Christchurch
- Ferndown
- Verwood
- South-west Hampshire (Ringwood Medical Centre, Twin Oaks Medical Centre, Cornerways Medical Centre)

Advice is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Telephone number: 0300 019 5470

Clinical Nurse Specialist advice is available between the hours of 08:00 -18:00 (17:00 at weekends)

Outside of these hours the call will go through to the specialist inpatient unit ([Macmillan Unit](#)) who can advise.

Referrals are accepted by:

- e-referrals service (GP surgeries **must** submit referrals via this route)
- referral form by e-mail – MacUnitAdmin@uhd.nhs.uk
- letter (referrers should be aware that this can introduce significant delays to the referral process)
- Referrals made by telephone should be supplemented by written information or referral form.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- Please include the following information as a minimum:
 - Patient demographics (name, DOB, home address and telephone number)
 - Diagnosis
 - Current location of patient
 - Reason(s) for referral
- Telephone if a referral is urgent. (Please note that urgent means an assessment is required within 2 working days. In general, all patients will receive contact within a fortnight.)

The SPC service will:

- Triage referrals within 1 working day of receipt
- Act within an appropriate timescale depending on the urgency of the request
- Refer on to other parts of the SPC service as necessary (for example HPCT to CPCT at point of discharge)