

18th Floor
Portland House
Bressenden House
London SW1E 5RS
Email: info@ncat.nhs.uk
www.ncat.nhs.uk

Gateway Number: 15612

22nd Feb 2011

Dear Colleague,

Draft Sarcoma Measures for the Manual of Cancer Services

I am writing to let you know that a draft version of the Sarcoma Measures are being issued today for a three-month consultation (Start Date 22 February 2011 Close Date: 16 May 2011). A copy of the draft measures can be found in the Cancer Section on the Department of Health web-site www.dh.gov.uk or the CQUINS web-site www.cquins.nhs.uk.

It is the intention to add the Sarcoma Measures to the Manual of Cancer Service.

The Purpose of the Manual of Cancer Services

The Manual of Cancer Services supports the quality assurance of cancer services and acts as a driver for quality improvement in the commissioning and delivery of cancer services.

Development of this Manual of Cancer Services and the continuation of a revised peer review process have been supported by the service. An independent evaluation of the National Cancer Peer Review Programme also demonstrated strong support for the programme to continue, subject to reducing the burden of peer review and putting greater emphasis on outputs and outcomes as and when data becomes available. In response to this the number of measures has been reduced by over one third in 2008 and more recently by a further 10%.

Improving Outcomes Guidance (IOG) for cancer services now covers the vast majority of all cancers. Implementation of this guidance, which involves the establishment of multidisciplinary teams and reconfiguration of some complex services is now well advanced for many cancers. The manual has therefore been drawn up to incorporate the recommendations contained within such guidance including the new guidelines published by NICE. It identifies the characteristics of service that are likely to have a significant impact on health outcomes. The NHS is not required to adhere to the standards in the Manual. It is intended that those characteristics should help those involved in planning, commissioning, organising, and providing cancer services to identify gaps in provision and to support the quality assurance of services enabling quality improvements. The Manual is used by the National Cancer Peer Review Programme as part of the assessment of cancer services and to provide a ready specification for the commissioning of cancer services within a given locality.

The National Cancer Peer Review Programme, which is led by the National Cancer Action Team and includes expert clinical and user representation, provides important information about the quality of cancer services across the country and supports the development of leadership, self regulation and governance.



The peer review programme has adopted an annual self-assessment process supported by a targeted visit programme. This annual process allows up to date information to be available to support the commissioning of cancer services and patient choice.

The development of cancer measures is an ongoing process in order to:

- Reflect new NICE guidance and revisions to existing NICE guidance.
- Allow greater influence by users of cancer services and their carers.
- Take account of possible modifications to measures following peer review visits.
- Ensure the scope of measures encompasses the broader implementation of Improving Outcomes: A strategy for Cancer, including actions to support the development of commissioning of cancer services.

The Draft Sarcoma Measures

The draft Sarcoma measures reflect the recommendations of the NICE Improving Outcomes Guidance for People with Sarcoma. It is acknowledged that there will be variation in the pace of implementation of the recommendations given current financial constraints and that any reconfiguration will need to take account of the government's vision for locally led NHS service changes. See link below for further information:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/MediaCentre/Pressreleases/DH_116290

The Consultation Process

It is hoped that you will contribute to this consultation exercise to ensure that the published Sarcoma Measures are both comprehensive and clear.

The purpose of this consultation is not to reopen the extensive consultation on the guidance, but rather to invite your comments on the contents of the draft measures, for example:

- Is the wording of each quality measure sufficiently clear? Are there instances where there is some ambiguity as to what is required?
- What additional, if any, supplementary guidance on the quality measures is required?
- Are there any important gaps?

To achieve the target of publishing the Sarcoma measures by early 2011 the programme for considering responses and making appropriate amendments has a very short timescale. The receipt of any responses in advance of the three-month deadline would therefore be much appreciated. For the same reason it will not be possible to consider any comments that are received after the deadline, 16th May 2011.

A proforma has been provided to assist you in compiling your comments on the contents of either or both of the drafts and this can also be found on the Department of Health web-site or CQuINS web-site.

Any comments on either of the drafts should be submitted by 16th May 2011 to:

Zara Gross
Project Assistant, National Cancer Peer Review
National Cancer Action Team



18th Floor
Portland House
Bressenden Place
London
SW1E 5RS
Tel: 02082826315
Email: zara.gross@ncpr.org.uk

The consultation will follow the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation

<http://www.berr.gov.uk/policies/better-regulation/consultation-guidance>

For DH consultations, comments or complaints (but not responses to the consultation itself) should be directed to:

Consultations Coordinator
Room 3E48, Quarry House
Quarry Hill
Leeds
LS2 7UE
email: consultations.co-ordinator@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in most circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours sincerely,



Stephen Parsons
Director
National Cancer Action Team

