

MACMILLAN COMMUNITY LINK WORKER SERVICE

A Macmillan Community Cancer Link Worker supporting cancer patients with their wider social needs

AT A GLANCE

- **Project aim:** To improve **quality of life (QOL)** as well as improve the awareness of, access to, and uptake of services available for those living with and beyond cancer.
- **Cohort:** Cancer patients living in Wandsworth, and from April 2023, also those living in Merton and Croydon.
- **Personalised Care Team:** A Macmillan Community Cancer Link Worker is a **non-clinical, community based role** as part of Enable team.
- **Referral:** The original service based in Wandsworth received referrals directly from GPs, clinicians and SPLWs. The new service from April 2023 will also receive self-referrals.
- **Who:** Enable, a non-for-profit organisation, in partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support.

FUNDING

- Macmillan Community Cancer Link Worker funded by Macmillan.

LEAD: Lydia Singer, Health and Wellbeing Project Manager, Enable.

RESULTS

- The service in Wandsworth ran for **22 months** with **over 350 referrals** and **290 patients** were supported.
- Comparison of ONS4 scores at baseline and follow-up demonstrated a **statistically significant increase in life satisfaction, in feeling life was worthwhile and in happiness & a statistically significant decrease in anxiety.**

THE CHALLENGE

- **Over 70%** of people living with cancer need emotional support: two in five are affected by depression and one in ten are affected by anxiety - [Macmillan Cancer Support Understanding Social Care Needs](#).
- **625K people** are living with cancer in the UK.
- One in four of those living with cancer will face poor health or disability after treatment - [Macmillan Long-term consequences of cancer and its treatment](#).



THE ACTION PLAN

- Cancer patients who are struggling to come to terms with their diagnosis, who have **financial/employment concerns or family/relationship issues**, or who want to improve QoL by keeping active or engaging with local activities, can be referred to the Macmillan Community Cancer Link Worker.
- The service can support anyone with a **cancer diagnosis at any stage of the pathway**, including carers and family members. All health care professionals supporting residents in the three boroughs can refer.
- The Link Worker will offer an initial one hour appointment, virtually or in person, to understand individual needs. They can refer or signpost the cancer patient to relevant courses, psychological support, complementary therapies, wellbeing activities, benefits advice, or support groups. As well as regional and national support services and local services dependant on the area.
- Patients have regular follow-ups for encouragement & motivation. ONS4, EQ5D and FACT-G tools used to measure outcomes.
- The service will also deliver **peer support to GP based link workers** across the three boroughs, and **specialist cancer training** to upskill and build GP based link workers confidence in supporting people living with and beyond cancer.

NEXT STEPS

- A new service from April 2023 will be delivered in **Wandsworth, Merton and Croydon**, and referral dates go live from the beginning of May.