

# Specialist Community Palliative Care Team

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A Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) is a qualified nurse that is an expert in the field of palliative care. They offer specialist advice and support to people in their own homes or in a clinical setting if they are diagnosed with a condition that they will not get better from. This can include illnesses such as cancer, other long-term conditions including respiratory disease and heart failure, or neurological conditions such as motor neurone disease.

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The CNS will support you as best they can with any concerns, worries or advice you may need in relation to your diagnosis. They will try to identify, with you, what matters to you most and what your priorities of care may be. This could also include discussions around Advance Care Plans (ACP) and your thoughts about hospital admissions and your care in the future.

### **How our CNS Team works**

Our CNS Team will work closely with your GP, Hospital Team (if you have one) and your District Nurse (DN) Team. If you are not known to a DN Team, with your permission, the CNS Team will refer you to them. Your records will be kept up to date with any advice or guidance they give you.

Your CNS can also arrange for you to be seen by a specialist doctor in palliative care should this be needed; this may be in your home or alternatively in an outpatient clinic. Should the CNS feel you need additional support, they can also arrange for you to be admitted to our Inpatient Unit with your consent.

The nurses may make suggestions to you in terms of medications that you are taking or introduce other medications to aid any symptoms related to your condition. They will guide you on how and when to take

these medications and discuss this further with other professionals involved in your care when required. You will receive any additional medication prescribed by a CNS or GP in the same way as you get your other medications.

As part of the wider support offered by Birmingham Hospice, your CNS may also refer you to other services that may be of benefit to you, such as our Living Well Centre and Complementary Therapist. They may also introduce you to different healthcare professionals, including Social Workers, Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists if required.

### **How to get in touch**

The CNS Team work seven days a week, including Bank Holidays, between 8am and 8pm.

If you need to contact them outside of the times that they have arranged to contact you, please call **0121 809 1900** and select the site that supports you (option one for Selly Park, option two for Erdington).

Outside of these hours, you can also call the above number and our experienced Inpatient Unit Team will offer you advice or signpost you to the DN Team or other out-of-hours services which can visit 24-hours a day, if needed.