



Mount Vernon and
Watford Hospitals
NHS Trust

King's Fund

Breaking Bad News

Guidelines
and
Patient
Information
Card

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GUIDELINES FOR GIVING THE CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Organisation

A senior member of the team should give the diagnosis.
He/she should

- read the results in advance of the consultation
- Maximise privacy – if patient is on the ward, use separate room if possible, or ask other patients to move
have bleep/pager

Patient Information Card

This leaflet summarises information you have been given, and provides further information which you may find useful.

It is for your personal use and you are responsible for its safe keeping. You may find it helpful to take it with you next time you go to hospital.

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for the patient to
any unexpected

d information

NAME

ADDRESS

Further information and support for you and your family is available from the following organisations:

Local Organisations:

National Organisations:

BACUP, Bath Place, London EC2A 3JR

Tel: 0171-613 2121

CancerLink, 17 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JN

Tel: 0171-833 2451

Researched by the Patient Involvement Unit, Lynda Jackson
Macmillan Centre for Cancer Support and Information, Mount Vernon
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NAME

ADDRESS

HOSPITAL NUMBER

DATE

You have been seen in _____ clinic today
by _____ who is a:

consultant	<input type="checkbox"/>
senior registrar	<input type="checkbox"/>
registrar	<input type="checkbox"/>
senior house officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
house officer	<input type="checkbox"/>

The results of your tests show that _____

The next step is _____

Your next appointment is on _____ at _____
with _____

Your GP will be sent information about your results which you can discuss with him/her. They should arrive at the surgery in the next 7 – 10 days.

You have been given the following leaflets:

a) Information about your condition

BACUP ☐

CancerLink ☐

Hospital ☐

Breast Cancer Care ☐

b) who to contact for support or further information

Coping with Cancer – a Self Help Guide ☐

Help is There ☐

You or your family may wish to ask some more questions; if so
your hospital contact is:

Name _____

Position _____

Telephone number _____

Times available _____

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- minimise interruptions – divert phone leave bleep/pager with a colleague
- arrange support, preferably a specialist nurse
- ensure that suitable arrangements are made for the patient to return home
- document what has been said and how, and any unexpected reactions

Communication

- make formal introductions
- find out the patient's view of the problem
- use the word 'cancer' – avoid euphemisms
- check the patient's understanding
- give written information about support and information services
- give a contact number for further questions

Primary/secondary interface

GP should

- prepare patient if cancer is suspected
- give written information about what to expect at the hospital
- inform the consultant about the patient's social background and relevant family history

Consultant should

- inform GP of diagnosis as soon as possible
- inform GP of what has been said and the patient's reaction

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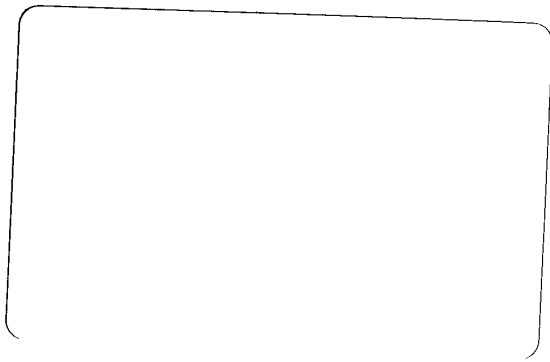
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