

# CONSTITUTION

This Constitution outlines the principles and values that underpin the foundation of the Peninsula Cancer Network. It describes its responsibilities towards the healthcare communities it serves and the reciprocal obligations that places upon its partners and stakeholders across the Peninsula. This complements the NHS Constitution for England published on 21 January 2009.

## Summary

The Peninsula Cancer Network exists to secure equal access to high quality care for all cancer patients; strive for better clinical outcomes and improve the experience of patients, their carers and families throughout screening, diagnosis, treatment, aftercare and survival.

The Network has an increasing role in the prevention of cancer and reducing health inequalities. To achieve these goals it collaborates with all healthcare providers, commissioners, patients and their carers throughout Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

## Principles

The prime purpose of the Cancer Network is to maintain and develop the best possible treatment and care for cancer patients resident in Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

The Network supports the provision of comprehensive cancer services to all the 1.7 million residents in the Peninsula and those visitors who have similar needs irrespective of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

The Network strives to secure the highest standards of excellence and professionalism in all its cancer services, irrespective of setting.

The Network promotes an environment in which patients, their families and their carers, where appropriate, are involved in and consulted on all decisions about their care and treatment.

The Network crosses organisational boundaries and is committed to working in partnership with the NHS, Local Authorities, Voluntary Bodies, Patient Groups and the community at large. It extends that partnership nationally through cancer charities and research institutions.

The Network seeks to maximise the human and financial resources committed to its work through effective Network working and demonstrating added value from the investment by the NHS and other bodies.

## **Role**

The Network is recognised as body which provides leadership on cancer services to the population within Devon, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly.

The Network adds value to the efforts of individual organisations to prevent cancer and improve cancer services by providing expert advice, sharing best practice and coordinating Peninsula wide initiatives.

The Network takes an overview of cancer prevention and treatment services and works with all organisations to identify and reduce inequalities.

The Network is recognised as body which provides advice and guidance on cancer services to the NHS commissioning and provider organisations within Devon, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly.

The Network will provide information on performance and delivery to its partner NHS organisations.

The Network will respond to requests from Primary Care Trusts for assistance in providing accurate and timely information to the South West Strategic Health Authority.

The Network is accountable to the NHS bodies it serves and through them to the public they serve.

## **The Network**

The Network comprises all those involved in cancer prevention, screening, diagnosis and the care of cancer patients, their carers and families within the Peninsula. The Network responsibilities and activities described in this constitution are vested in the Cancer Network Board to deliver through the Network Executive team.

The four Peninsula Primary Care Trusts have the responsibility for decisions on how the NHS should spend its resources locally and commissions services from all those organisations caring for patients. These range from General Practitioners through screening services, emergency services, outpatient services, inpatient care, community nursing to palliative and end of life care.

The major centres of population are served by five main acute hospitals and 42 community hospitals. The acute hospitals are managed by NHS Trusts and most of the others fall within four Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

The Chief Executive of each of these bodies is a member of the Network Board.

## **Clinical & Professional involvement**

All NHS organisations will be fully committed to the Peninsula Cancer Network, cooperating with its agreed decision making and advisory mechanisms, making their staff available to participate in the most appropriate fora and adopting the Network policies endorsed by the Board.

The Network will bring together clinicians and other professional staff from along the whole patient pathway to develop better clinical and operational practice to benefit patients. The effectiveness of this will be judged by service delivery improvements, clinical outcomes and the quality of patient experience.

The Network will manage and support Network Site Specific Groups (NSSGs) and all professional staff will have access to the NSSG which covers their branch of cancer care. Through this they will agree clinical guidelines, audit their services, share clinical experience and influence decisions about their services through their advice to the Network Board and NHS commissioners.

NHS professionals will bring their experience and expertise to the discussions within Network Groups without bias towards their employing organisation.

### **Patient Involvement**

All patients will have access to a means of making their views known on matters affecting them and their use of cancer services. This will be through Patient Partnership Groups which draw their membership from local Cancer User Groups and Specialist Patient Support Groups. Their experience will also be reflected in participation in Network Site Specific Group meetings.

The Network undertakes to provide all the necessary information about its proposals in an easily accessible form through the most appropriate of these bodies for the matter under consideration.

Patients will respect the role of the Network as a facilitatory and support organisation and contribute constructively to the development of its policies and their implementation.

### **Public Involvement**

The Network will support its partner organisations in their engagement with the public on issues relating to the provision of cancer services, working with LINK Groups; Local Authority Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees and other public bodies as appropriate.

### **Service Standards and Quality**

The Network will promote patient safety and ensure the necessary action is highlighted and delivered by the relevant organisation.

The Network will work to support screening services to achieve and exceed the quality standards of national screening programmes.

The Network will use the national Cancer Measures Handbook as the reference guide to the quality of cancer services and NHS Primary Care Trusts will commission services in accordance with those standards.

The Network will promote the implementation of the Improving Outcomes Guidance in each type of cancer to secure the enhanced clinical outcomes, performance and delivery envisaged by the national clinical specialists from whom it originated.

This varies from the concentration of complex surgery in centres of excellence to the provision of outreach services such as chemotherapy nearer to home. In each instance, the motivation is to design a service that best meets the needs of the patient and achieves the best possible outcome.

Network Site Specific Groups serve to support clinical collaboration, develop clinical guidelines, audit current practice, promote innovative treatment and provide expert advice to the commissioners of cancer services.

The Network will support the Public Health & Primary Care Group (PH&PCG) on which all four PCTs, Professional Executive Committees, Local Medical Committees and the Royal College of General Practitioners are represented.

The PH&PCG will be the clinical reference group for Public Health and Primary care matters including taking a Network wide overview of the priorities for cancer care including health needs, gaps in services, inequalities in health and access to healthcare.

The PH&PCG will raise awareness of the importance of prevention, screening and early diagnosis in improving health outcomes in cancer care

By working with all these groups, the Cancer Network supports the delivery of a seamless programme of care to patients.

### **Commissioning**

The Network will support the Peninsula Cancer Collective Commissioning Group (PCCCG) in its role to encourage consistent and integrated commissioning decisions across all four PCTs. It brings together their Directors of Commissioning and the Network Senior Management Team to consider proposals developed through the Network and the potential for their incorporation into the annual contracting process.

The Network will support the work of Local Cancer Implementation Groups which meet regularly to encourage joint working, service development and review the performance of cancer service providers, involving Trust management and clinicians, primary care practitioners, hospices and patients.

The Network will support the Peninsula Health Technology Appraisal Group which determines the appropriateness and value of emerging medicines and other technologies. The Network will monitor its detailed assessments ensure an equitable policy on the availability of these to cancer patients across the Peninsula.

The Network will promote the development of World Class Commissioning across the full spectrum of its activities.

### **Provider Support and Development**

The Network will support the work of all five acute cancer management teams in their delivery of cancer services. The Network Cancer Services Group ensures the integration of any shared patient care between District General Hospitals and specialist centres within the

Peninsula. As a combined resource, the Group has guided the introduction of video-conferencing between all Trusts and into the community.

The Network Information Group provides valuable support to the cancer information managers and enables a consistent interpretation of datasets, waiting time definitions and reporting requirements to regional and national bodies. It shares intelligence on performance issues and analyses breaches in waiting times targets.

The Network will support the work of the Hospice movement and other charitable bodies providing services to cancer patients and their carers.

### **Communication**

The Network will make available up to date information on its activities for professionals and patients. This is through the Network website, an important communication resource for the Network and the public. It provides a single portal to all cancer services and information resources locally, nationally and internationally. Sharing a common platform with the Network's host organisation, Torbay Care Trust, brings significant benefits to both parties and their IT partner South Devon Healthcare ensures its availability 24/7.

The quarterly Network News newsletter will provide topical information in an accessible form increasingly targeted at the hard to reach parts of the Network. The Annual Report is a formal requirement but will be taking on a more accessible style in its next edition.

Patient Information initiatives have taken a great leap forward with the introduction of Patient Information Prescriptions. These are being piloted in colorectal cancer services and will include all cancer sites in the near future.

### **Peer Review**

The Network will fully engage in annual peer reviews and support activity with all its partner organisations throughout the year to ensure their awareness of the requirements to demonstrate compliance with national cancer standards.

The Network will ensure that patients have a strong voice providing a valuable external assessment of cancer services from the patient perspective both within Trusts and wider pan-Peninsula services.

### **Accountability**

The Network draws its strength from the commitment of its constituent organisations. This is reflected in the membership of its Board which includes the Chief Executives of all four PCTs and five acute Trusts. They are joined by representatives of Peninsula voluntary bodies and patient groups. The Strategic Health Authority has ex-officio membership.

The Network Board is chaired by the Chief Executive of Torbay Care Trust, which hosts the Network executive team, and in this capacity is directly accountable to the Chief Executive of the South West Strategic Health Authority.

## **Governance**

The Board will exercise collective responsibility for the Network policies and practices it endorses. These will include clinical guidelines, service configuration, patient pathways, cancer measures and quality standards.

## **Cancer Awareness**

The Network will develop strategies and projects to promote life-style choices to help prevent cancer and greater awareness of cancer symptoms by the public to encourage earlier presentation to general practitioners who themselves will be supported in raising their awareness threshold to achieve an early cancer diagnosis.

## **Service Improvement**

The Network will deploy its team of Service Improvement facilitators working collectively and in individual Peninsula NHS organisations to promote the ongoing development of good operational and organisational practice in support of clinical cancer services.

## **Organisation**

The Network will provide the organisational environment in which clinical teams can work together to develop consistent high quality care across the Peninsula.

The Network will organise regular Network Site Specific and Cross Cutting Group meetings to meet this objective.

These will be led by a Chairman drawn from the Group membership and supported by the Network Management Team.

**Agreed by Peninsula Cancer Network Board 25 September 2009**