



Referral Criteria and Guidance for Marie Curie Hospice Services

Introduction

Marie Curie Hospice provides Specialist Palliative Care for people with progressive life limiting illness and support for their families and carers, given by a multiprofessional team.

Referrals should be based on the individual's needs rather than diagnosis – the Hospice provides care for patients with cancer and non-cancer diseases

General Criteria for Referral for Services

Patients should be aged eighteen years or over and normally live within the Belfast HSC Trust or South Eastern HSC Trust catchment areas.

Referrals are accepted for all of the following:

- Admission for end of life care are accepted when the patient's estimated prognosis is not significantly more than two weeks and the admission is in accordance with the patient's known wishes (**Terminal/End of Life Care**)
- The patient's symptoms or problems are complex and would be more appropriately managed and monitored in an in-patient setting and where specialist supervision is required. This includes the management of all symptoms, be they physical, emotional, psychological or spiritual. (**Symptom Control**)
- Admission for patients with recognised rehabilitation needs which may be physical or psychological / spiritual. The aim of the admission is goal orientated, with the patient contributing to set clear, achievable goals including a review date and/or a discharge date. (**Rehabilitation**)
- A planned admission for clinically stable patients, usually of one or two weeks (maximum) duration, with a planned discharge date, that facilitates continued care at home. (**Respite Care - Planned**)
- A time-limited admission for patients with specialist palliative care needs, where an unforeseen event may lead to a breakdown in the patient's care at home. (**Respite Care – Crisis Avoidance**)

Note: Marie Curie Hospice Belfast does not provide long term inpatient care. Admissions are planned for approximately 2 weeks with the majority of patients being discharged to the most appropriate place for ongoing care. The length of stay may vary depending on the patient's condition or changing needs.

Making a Referral for Inpatient Care:

Requests for admission will be accepted from GPs, Community Specialist Palliative Care Nurses, Hospital Consultants and Clinical Nurse Specialists, Marie Curie Day Therapy team, Oncology and Palliative Care teams or other locally agreed sources. Hospital referrals will only be accepted if the patient is ready to transfer at the time of referral. The patient needs to have given their consent or have it documented as part of their advanced care plan before a referral is made.

Non Urgent referrals

Referrals should be made using a **Marie Curie Cancer Care Referral Form** via fax or post only.

Urgent Referrals for Admission

Referrals for an urgent admission must be marked **urgent** and the referrer must telephone the Ward Manager/Doctor to notify them of the referral and the degree of urgency. The phone call should be followed up with a faxed referral. Patients requiring admission from home will be prioritised.

All referrals are discussed by the multi-disciplinary team at the Admissions Meeting which is held daily at 09.30hrs.

Referrals for patients requiring physical rehabilitation should include a physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy assessment, where possible.

Patients may be admitted from home, hospital, nursing/ residential home or another hospice. Priority will be based on clinical need but should normally be given to those patients needing admission from home.

Emergency and Out of Hours Admissions

Where it is possible admissions will be arranged within normal working hours.

An admission is classified as out of hours after 17.00 hrs and before 09.00 hrs, Monday to Friday and from 17.00 hrs on Friday to 09.00 hrs on Monday.

Emergency referrals may be made by telephone, and the admission may be arranged prior to the receipt of the referral documentation.

The referrer should provide a verbal handover to the clinician on duty. The referrer should also be asked to send the referral documentation at the earliest opportunity.

Day Therapy & Outpatient Services

The aim of Specialist Palliative Day Therapy is to enhance the independence and quality of life of patients living in the community through the provision of:

- Comprehensive patient assessment and an individualised programme of care tailored to the individual needs of the patient.
- Rehabilitation following palliative interventions (such as surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy)
- Coping with a life threatening illness

- Individual and group support
- Creative and relaxation therapies
- Respite for carers
- Strategies for the management of fatigue, breathlessness and anxiety
- Blood transfusions, Bisphosphonate infusions

Referrals may also be made for specific therapies/outpatient clinics e.g.:

- Physiotherapy
- Social Work
- Complementary Therapy
- Breathing Space Lung Clinic
- Wellbeing Clinic
- Lymphoedema Clinic
- Carers Support
- Out-Patient Appointments

Criteria for referral to Day Therapy

- Diagnosis of a progressive life-threatening illness
- Complex palliative care needs that can not be met by current health and social care professionals
- The patient should be well enough to attend Day Therapy
- The patient wishes to attend

Patients will be offered an agreed number of sessions to suit their individual assessed needs.

Referrals can be made by GP's, hospital doctors, community specialist teams, Clinical Nurse Specialists, district Nurses. Pre-attendance visits are encouraged for anyone being referred.

Referrals should be made using a **Marie Curie Cancer Care Referral Form** via fax or post only.

Discharge or onward care of patients will be arranged when:

- The specialist palliative care needs of the patient have been met.
- The patient's on-going needs can be met by their primary and social care professionals.
- Every effort will be made to facilitate a supported and timely discharge in accordance with the patient's wishes in collaboration with relevant professionals, the patient and carers.

Please send Referral Form to below address – *fax if urgent and confirm receipt by telephone*

Marie Curie Hospice Kensington Road,
Belfast BT5 6NF
Telephone: 028 90882000
Fax: 028 90882022

**24 Hour Specialist Palliative Care Advice for professional staff
028 90882000**