

Strathcarron Hospice Referral and Admission Procedures

Service Provision

- The Specialist Palliative Care Service based at Strathcarron Hospice is available to patients with active, progressive malignant disease (90%) or neurological /other disease (10%). Patients will be accepted from Forth Valley and from Cumbernauld or Kilsyth in North Lanarkshire.
- The service aims to support and supplement mainstream health care and adopts a multidisciplinary and collaborative ethos when involved in patient care. The range of presenting needs/concerns appropriate for referral include symptom control, end of life care, psychosocial and emotional support, family support, rehabilitation and bereavement support.
- In addition to End of life care, the In-patient Unit (24 beds) provides supportive care with the aim of maximising the potential of the individual and their family, and where appropriate facilitating discharge back into the community. We are unable to offer long term care.
- We can also provide 1) Day Care at the hospice; 2) Support to individuals and their families in the Community and advice to the Primary Care Team; 3) Advice through the Hospital Palliative Care Support Teams.
- The situation may arise where, as a finite resource, we are unable to accept patients for in patient care despite identified need. In this event, we will continue to provide specialist support to other professionals and maximise other available resources until such time as the service can be accessed directly.

Accessing the service

- Referrals are accepted from Consultants, GPs, or from nurses who have the consent of the appropriate Doctor. Referrals may originate in Primary Care, Acute Care, Care Homes, Community Hospitals or Tertiary sites.
- Referrals to any aspect of the Specialist Palliative Care Service should be agreed by the patient, the carer and the GP/Consultant.
- If the patient satisfies the referral criteria for a particular aspect of the Specialist Palliative Care Service, it should be accessed via a referral form. This is available electronically via the SCI Gateway, by e-mail or fax from the hospice medical secretary or via the hospice web-site – www.strathcarronhospice.org [Click on 'Caring' then on "How to refer a patient"].
- Completed referrals (non SCI Gateway) can be submitted by post or fax (Safe Haven Fax no 01324 826119). The hard copy of a faxed referral should be forwarded by post.
- Only Urgent referrals may be made by telephone. These calls should be taken by the medical secretary and referred to Medical Staff for a decision that same day. A completed referral form should be faxed to the hospice within 24 hours.
- All patients who meet the eligibility criteria will be considered, irrespective of race, creed, disability, age, gender or ethnic group.
- A waiting list and priority rating system is in operation for admission to the In patient unit. It is for this reason that the referral form should be completed accurately throughout, with particular emphasis on the sections detailing 'current care issues' and 'family/social/psychological/spiritual' issues.

Referral Criteria for Strathcarron Hospice

1. Referral Criteria to any component of Specialist Palliative Care Service

- Active progressive disease (See Page 1 for Scope)
- Complex physical, psychosocial, emotional, spiritual or bereavement issues
- Patient living within Forth Valley / Cumbernauld / Kilsyth
- Patient / Family / GP / Consultant agreement to referral
- Referrer identifies a clear need for input of Specialist Palliative Care Services
- Care cannot be offered more appropriately elsewhere

2. Additional Criteria for admission to In patient Service

- Need for symptom control e.g.
 - Pain
 - Constipation / diarrhoea / Intestinal Obstruction
 - Breathlessness, cough, other respiratory symptoms
 - Nausea, Vomiting
 - Anorexia, cachexia and nutrition
 - Depression, Anxiety and Confusion
 - Emergencies in Palliative Care e.g. Hypercalcaemia
- End of life care
- Co-morbidity of carer / family
- Maximising potential quality of life
- Social circumstances e.g. living alone, young family
- Availability of a bed
- Able to tolerate a smoke free environment, using nicotine replacement or other available support when needed

3. Additional Criteria for admission to Day Care Service

- Patient able and willing to attend day care
- Patient aware that a process of regular review will determine duration of attendance
- Suitable transport available – either with volunteer driver provided by the hospice or Dial-a-Journey
- Ongoing need for specialist advice on pain, symptom control or psychosocial support
- Maximising of function / quality of life
- Co-morbidity of family / carer
- Help with physical care e.g. use of specialised bath
- Availability of a place
- Able to tolerate a smoke free environment, using nicotine replacement or other available support when needed

4. Additional Criteria for admission to Home Care Service

- Be able and willing to receive care at home
- Patient aware that a process of regular review will determine duration of input
- Require advice or management of pain and/or other symptoms
- Co-morbidity of family/carers
- Actual/Potential bereavement needs

Decision-making and Communication re Referral

- Once a completed referral form is received, it will be reviewed by a member of the Medical staff /Senior Nursing team for appropriateness and urgency. Outcome of decisions regarding the referral will normally recommend access to one or more aspects of our service. This decision will be communicated to the patient and referrer within two working days of receipt. Urgent referrals will be passed onto Medical staff for decision on the same day.
- In addition to this service, Health Care Professionals will be able to obtain advice from a member of the Specialist Palliative Care Team at Strathcarron Hospice 24 hours a day by telephoning 01324 826222.
- Complex issues regarding access should be discussed with Consultant or senior member of the Medical/Nursing team.