

## Freedom of Information request 404-18

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### Request & Response

We would be grateful if you could answer the following questions, relating to the support provided to patients with a diagnosis of secondary breast cancer under the care of your Health Board.

By a diagnosis of secondary breast cancer, we mean breast cancer that has spread to other parts of the body such as the bones, lungs, liver or brain. Secondary breast cancer is also referred to as 'metastatic' or 'advanced' or 'stage 4' breast cancer.

Our questions

#### Holistic Needs Assessments (HNAs)

1) Do patients with secondary breast cancer have a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA), used to plan their care, conducted at the point of diagnosis (of their secondary breast cancer) and/or as their treatment changes?

- **Yes, when a patient's treatment changes or at any other time when undertaking an HNA will prove to be a useful tool in assessing an individual's needs.**

2) If yes, do the HNAs cover the following areas?

- Emotional concerns and needs - **Yes**
- Physical concerns and needs - **Yes**
- Information needs - **Yes**
- Consideration of palliative care needs – **No**

#### Access to a Clinical Nurse Specialist

3) How many people with secondary breast cancer are currently under the care of your Health Board? – **NHS Borders currently has approx. 56 metastatic patients.**

4) Do all patients with secondary breast cancer under the care of your Health Board have access to a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience of secondary breast cancer? - **Yes**

5) If yes, do these nurses:

- a) provide care to secondary breast cancer patients only? – **No**
- b) provide care to both primary and secondary breast cancer patients? - **Yes**

6) If yes, please provide the number of CNS posts that fall under each of these categories (as applicable):

- a) CNSs that provide care to secondary breast cancer patients only – **N/A**
- b) CNSs that provide care to both primary and secondary breast cancer patients – **Band 7 1WTE**

7) If there are CNS posts within your Health Board that provide care to both primary and secondary breast cancer patients, please tell us if they:

- a) work in a combined role (where the care of both primary and secondary breast cancer patients is part of their formal job description) – **Yes**
- b) work across both areas but their formal job description only covers primary breast cancer patients - **No**

## Information and referrals

8) At diagnosis and/or during the time they are under the care of your Health Board, are patients with secondary breast cancer provided with the following information and/or referred to the following services?

- local and national secondary breast cancer support services - **Yes**
- specialist services for financial and employment advice - **Yes**
- information on talking to those closest to them about the impact of living with secondary breast cancer - **Yes**
- information about support available for family members - **Yes**
- local palliative and supportive care services, including referral for symptom control when needed – **Yes**
- support and information on planning end-of-life care - **Yes**

## Treatment Summaries

9) Do patients with secondary breast cancer receive a Treatment Summary\* at the end of each significant phase of treatment? – **No, but they do after each episode of chemotherapy.**

## Access to Health and Wellbeing Events

10) Does your Health Board offer a Health and Wellbeing event\* suitable for patients with secondary breast cancer? - **Yes**

By suitable, we mean that it is adapted to be relevant to the needs of those living with secondary breast cancer. For example:

- focuses on living with cancer, rather than adapting after finishing treatment
- may be more than one session, rather than a single event
- may include discussions on specific topics such as palliative care

(\*A Health and Wellbeing event is defined as a group education and support event which helps people to manage their physical and psychological health after a cancer diagnosis. An example of this is Breast Cancer Care's 'Living with Secondary Breast Cancer' service)

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or [foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk).

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **404-18** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.