

# CASE STUDY: INTER-PROFESSIONAL ONCOLOGY STUDY DAY

The Inter-professional Oncology Study Day is one of a series of inter-professional study days available to multi-professional learners held within Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust (RLBUHT).

The aims of the day are to improve learners' appreciation and understanding of the oncology patient's journey, and how they can influence this through a multidisciplinary team (MDT) collaborative approach. Complementary to this, a session is delivered to identify the MDT roles and approach in oncology.

The National Cancer Survey results are discussed within each study day and explored to highlight the values and behaviours of healthcare professionals and healthcare delivery. The agenda is carefully tailored to meet the needs of the multi-professional audience, which has made the day successful as evidenced by the many positive evaluations. Realistic expectations, care and compassion are key themes throughout the day. To ensure that the quality of clinical expertise is credible and current the speakers are all multi-professional subject matter experts. Audience members consist of learners from the following professions: nursing, healthcare scientists, paramedics, dietetics, undergraduate medicine, speech and language therapies, radiology, pharmacy and audiology.

Service users/patients also contribute to the study day by delivering sessions and recalling their personal experiences of their oncology journey. Providing this opportunity for service users/patients to engage with healthcare professionals in training demonstrates the value the Trust places on a safe, effective, high quality patient experience.

## Key Outcomes

- An evaluation of this study day showed very positive feedback from participants with 34% rating it as excellent, 64% as good, and 2% as satisfactory. Comments included:
  - *"Informative day, good all round knowledge given on cancer"*
  - *"I would recommend this study day to colleagues"*
  - *"good to hear patient experiences, it helps to see that cancer affects real people"*
  - *"good to know how to help and what services are offered"*
- As well as patients there was also significant multi-professional representation at the event with speakers including a cancer lead nurse, radiographer, clinical scientist, clinical nurse specialist, researcher, dietitian, pharmacist, and Macmillan cancer information manager. Attendees included first year Science Training Programme (STP) students in biochemistry and medical physics, speech and language therapy, radiography and dietetics, as well as second year medical students and paramedics, and third year nursing, audiology and pharmacy students
- By the end of the study day students had a greater understanding of the patient experience - this has a positive impact on the delivery of patient care and treatment to which the student contributes
- Additional feedback suggests students enjoyed learning alongside other students
- In light of the success of the day the Trust's lead cancer nurse would like to replicate the event for staff involved in cancer care



- It is really difficult to measure the impact of service delivery and this remains to be a challenge. However in the future a further evaluation will be conducted with attendees, approximately six months after the study day to specifically try to measure this.

In light of the multi-professional contribution required to provide cancer services, the value of focusing on oncology for students can be seen as contributing to holistic patient care, and multi-professional service provision (Barr, Helme & D'Avary, 2011).

## Background

The Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust is one of the largest and busiest hospital trusts in the North of England with an annual budget of over £400 million, and 5,600 staff. It is situated in Liverpool city centre and currently has over 710 beds. The Trust delivers patient-focused, service-led care to the people of Liverpool and the North West of England by working closely with health and social care partners and by involving service users/patients and staff in research projects, future plans and everyday operational issues.

Services are provided across two sites which contain three hospitals: the Royal Liverpool University Hospital, Broadgreen Hospital and Liverpool University Dental Hospital.

RLBUHT is one of the top 20 teaching trusts in the country with well established links to both the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moore's University. Each year the Trust provides a large number of placements for student doctors, dentists, nurses and allied health professionals who benefit from the expertise and experience of some of the most skilled clinicians in the country. Currently, there are in excess of 200 undergraduate medical students receiving training at Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust. In addition the Trust facilitates over 500 placement opportunities for non-medical professions. In support of practice placements the Trust has in excess of 800 mentors and practice educators, enabling the student/trainee to meet profession specific regulatory body requirements.

## Oncology – local context

Health inequalities exist within the local Liverpool population and mortality is 30% higher in Liverpool than in England/Wales as a whole (Office of National Statistics, 2006). Cancer plays a significant part in these mortality figures and whilst death rates from cancer are falling they remain higher than the national average.

RLBUHT is the main tertiary cancer centre for surgery in Mersey and Cheshire Cancer Network with eleven specialist tertiary multidisciplinary teams and seven local multidisciplinary teams. The Trust is also a pilot site for three national survivorship programmes for breast, bladder and colorectal cancers.

The aim for the local health economy is to expand cancer services with a dedicated cancer centre based in Liverpool with the provision of new specialist oncology services including inpatient academic clinical trials, inpatient and young adults cancer services, inpatient palliative care and acute oncology.

## Key Aims

- Work with the lead cancer nurse to improve the experience for cancer patients.
- Hear the patient perspective.
- Improve awareness of resources so that students can signpost patients appropriately.
- Learn about the contribution of other professions.
- Personally reflect on personal development needs in relation to oncology care

## Key Stages of Setup

This study day was facilitated and arranged by the Practice Education Facilitator (PEF) team in collaboration with the multi-professional practice group (education leads). In addition for this day the lead cancer nurse was a key member of the group.

## How It Works

This study day is delivered in two ways. The morning session is held in the lecture theatre and sessions are delivered to all students at the same time. Sessions for the morning programme include:

1. an overview of the current picture
2. the patient experience delivered by two patients
3. routes to diagnosis including radiography and tumour markers
4. overview of cancer treatments
5. cancer research trials
6. the multidisciplinary team

The afternoon session is delivered through a series of workshops to allow for smaller groups and to increase interaction between participants. All participants were able to experience each workshop, including:

1. the role of nutrition in cancer care
2. pharmacy oncology
3. cancer information

The day ended with a review of the Trust's results from the National Cancer Survey

All sessions are delivered by subject experts who receive the evaluation data provided by the students.

## Resources

As this was an in-house event there was no financial cost to the organisation, however the resources required included; subject experts, venue and collaboration between education leads to support the access for students on placement.

## Key Challenges

- Participant evaluation suggests that some students fail to appreciate the value of learning about and from other professionals with comments such as 'irrelevant to my profession' being evidence of this.
- Measuring value and impact is limited to student feedback, although the inclusion of quizzes throughout the day suggests learning is taking place.
- Encouraging students to talk and work together in mixed professional groups can be challenging. To overcome this, the workshop groups are pre-organised by PEFs to be multi-professional.

## Key Learning

It is important to:

- have very specific and clear aims to the day regarding inter-professional learning.
- further encourage subject experts to incorporate elements of inter-professional learning and examples into their sessions.
- have first hand accounts from patients, which help to put the day in context and immediately focus the audience.

## Sustainability

- Subject experts who contributed to the study day discussed their working practices, which are now embedded in the workplace as is their liaison with students.
- Raising student awareness about cancer MDT meetings and their suitability as a learning opportunity ensures that future NHS workers are more familiar with such practices.

## Next Steps

- PEFs are planning an increase in IPL study days from two to three per year.
- A specific section will be included on the student evaluation tool that refers to the multi-professional nature of the day and how this may impact on their future practice.
- The evaluation tool will include specific learning outcomes
- Medical staff will be invited to take part as well as to deliver sessions

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