

## Terms of Reference

### Cancer Tumour Site Specific Groups (NSSGs)

#### Role and Purpose

The Cancer Tumour Site Specific Groups known as NSSGs are the prime focus of the Cancer Alliances clinical activity and are the source of “expert” clinical opinion from which advice is sought on a wide range of clinical service issues including best practice clinical guidelines, optimum treatment pathways and patient focused care. NSSGs adopt an evidence-based approach and regard the National Institute for Healthcare and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance as their reference for determining common standards and pathways for cancer patients. Across Lancashire & South Cumbria, NSSGs are established for the main tumour sites and cross cutting groups

The role of the NSSG is to ensure co-ordination of the cancer pathway, consistency of clinical practice and to achieve the best possible outcomes and experience for patients, irrespective of where their treatment and care is provided. The role of the NSSG includes:

- Identifying and raising awareness of population needs
- Service improvement
- Service monitoring including clinical performance and clinical outcomes
- Workforce development
- Research and development

These will form the basis of a work programme for the NSSG.

The site specific network group should have active engagement of all MDT/nominated service leads from the constituent organisations in the cancer clinical network. Cross cutting clinical groups should have nominated representation from all organisations.

NSSGs should include specialist nursing representation and demonstrate active patient engagement

#### Decision making process and frequency

NSSG meetings will be held three times per year and additional meetings may be necessary for short term task and finish projects. The meeting will be quorate when 50% of the MDTs or organisations for cross cutting groups are represented at the meeting.

#### Chair

The term of each role should be reviewed after three years. The Chair will have an annual review with the Cancer Alliance Clinical Director.

A key part of the role will be to ensure effective engagement of constituent members and communication with stakeholders

## Communication

The NSSG Chair will

- provide feedback to the Cancer Clinical Forum and present key areas of work as required
- will represent the Cancer Alliance appropriately, including at a regional and national level.
- ensure that an annual summary report from the NSSG is produced providing an overview of work completed and a forward view.

## Key Responsibilities

The responsibility of the NSSG is to:

- Consider how to adopt national guidelines/standards published by NICE, Department of Health, Royal Colleges and other professional bodies/committees setting out best practice.
- Review clinical outcome and performance data identifying and addressing variation.
- Agree referral and clinical guidelines and review these on a regular basis.
- Review approved clinical trials and other research & development initiatives, and encourage patient entry with its constituent MDTs.
- Undertake network wide audit and provide a forum for the wider discussion of local audits as part of its role in education and development.
- Develop and deliver education programmes which include specialists, primary and community care colleagues and the voluntary sector.
- Ensure there is a process for obtaining patient and carer advice and involvement in service issues and in the development of plans related to the NSSG.

## Strategic Development

The NSSG will ensure engagement and communication with stakeholders with regard to service plans and developments. This will include identification of investment requirements necessary to meet quality standards and outcomes which will serve to influence strategic commissioning plans. These will include

- Support the identification of local population needs and gaps in service in respect of the specific site or tumour/cross cutting service and participate in the development of plans to respond to these needs.
- Identifying service configuration required to deliver local and national guidelines and standards, and support the development of plans for implementation.
- Supporting the development of pathways of care across primary, secondary and tertiary services.
- Identifying workforce recommendations in response to service developments, recruitment difficulties and emergent technologies.

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