

HOPE courses for cancer patients at the West Suffolk Hospital



This document has been adapted for onscreen reading.

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'HOPE courses for cancer patients at the West Suffolk Hospital' is available as an A5 brochure from Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Centre – please see page 8 for details.

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What is a HOPE course?



The HOPE cancer survivor's course is an interactive, group-based self-management support course which runs for 6 weeks.

Each weekly session lasts 2.5 hours for groups of between 6 and 12 participants.

The course is for cancer patients and has been developed by Coventry University and Macmillan Cancer Support. Courses take place during morning or afternoon sessions. There is no cost to attend the course.

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"I felt abandoned".



"Following discharge after months of treatment I felt abandoned. Over the past year I'd gone through so much and had lots of support. Scores of hospital appointments were now over. I thought I should feel better but I felt as though I was in a black hole. I even felt guilty. Family and friends didn't understand. I'm so grateful to my Practice Nurse for suggesting the HOPE course. I can honestly say that the course saved my life. I feel calmer, more positive, more confident and know that I'm not alone in the feelings I have and problems I have faced (Cancer Survivor)"

During or after treatment a HOPE course provides you with the opportunity to meet and share with others who have gone through similar experiences. Together you'll learn new skills to help with moving on and ways to take control of your health and wellbeing - you'll rediscover your strengths.

Your Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS), GP, Practice Nurse, Counsellor, Cancer Information Centre or other health care professional may recommend you join a HOPE course. You may also register yourself – see page 10 for details.

At your next appointment pick up a flyer showing dates and times for the current years HOPE courses.

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HOPE courses - during or after your treatment?

For many people cancer treatment requires lots of appointments, dealing with a wide range of health professionals involved with your care, hours spent at hospital, maybe days as an inpatient and maybe many weeks off work. It may take over your life and after being discharged that intensity of professional support comes to an end.

At the end of treatment you may feel abandoned and struggle with the enormity of what you've gone through.

During treatment you may struggle with the enormity of what you are going through.

It may be that you are living with the consequences of the cancer and the treatment you received.

No matter what stage you are at with cancer, the HOPE course may be right for you.

"The HOPE course helped boost my confidence, we all supported each other throughout – I have realised that I have a lot to be grateful for despite living with cancer. I'd recommend it to anyone."

(Cancer Survivor)



Do you benefit from the support of others? If so then a HOPE course may be ideal for you.

The HOPE course provides a supportive, friendly group setting which will give you the knowledge, skills and confidence to cope with many of the frustrations, fears and sense of isolation that living with and surviving cancer can bring. Self-management is beneficial in many different ways. HOPE facilitators go through a training programme but more importantly they have either been personally affected by cancer or are a cancer health professional.

Topics covered:

- Managing your own recovery
- Setting achievable goals after cancer
- Boosting your self-esteem and body image
- Managing fatigue
- Dealing with stress, worries and fears
- Healthy eating, diet and nutrition
- Identifying your strengths and priorities
- Communication skills
- Healthy lifestyles and physical activity
- Fear of cancer recurrence



Working through these topics has been shown through research to have a positive impact on the health and well-being of people living with and affected by cancer.

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How HOPE courses help.

After attending HOPE courses participants feel:

- More confident and motivated
- Less depressed and anxious
- More relaxed
- More positive about the future
- More happy
- Less tired



What people say after attending a HOPE course.



"... I didn't see a future. I found that coming each week to the HOPE course you get to know the people who show friendship and understanding. The goal setting and being positive helped me go from being in a black

tunnel to seeing the light at the end." (Cancer survivor)

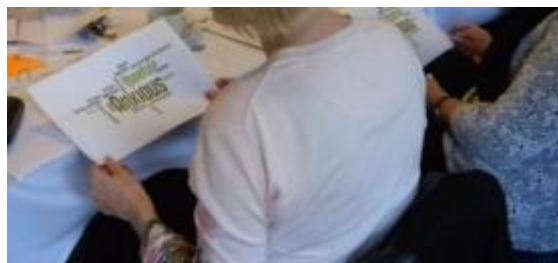
"I frequently use the breathing techniques if I'm awake at night and can't get back to sleep - it works! To chat and laugh, and exchange worries and hopes has been helpful. I certainly have a more positive outlook. Thank you for inviting me to take part." (Cancer survivor)



"Our facilitators made it easier for us to support each other throughout, sharing tears of sadness, tears of joy, times of seriousness & times of laughter. I'd recommend it to anyone." (Cancer survivor)

"I have enjoyed meeting others in a similar situation in a constructive environment. Everything about the course has been positive - an exercise in looking for the 'silver lining'. It makes you realise 'I can do that, I have got the ability to do that'." (Cancer survivor)

"I found the goal setting and the positive focus feedback on goals set helped participants to achieve what they wanted and to see that on their faces - to be able to share that with them is a privilege. The course gives people hope, that okay they've got this cancer in their life, but there are lots of other things to think about and move on". (Cancer survivor, HOPE course facilitator)



"You feel you have helped somebody through what can be really difficult time. Watching positivity and confidence flourish over the six weeks is a privilege to be a part of it." (HOPE course facilitator)

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Week by week – what the HOPE Course covers.

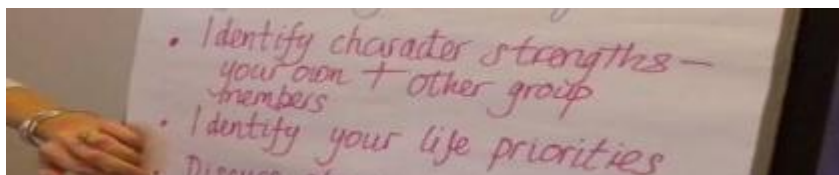
(there is a tea break half way though each session)

Week 1

- Welcome and Introductions
- Responsibilities and Ground Rules
- Instilling HOPE
- Gratitude Diary
- Goal Setting

Week 2

- Solution focus feedback on goal set
- Gratitude Diary
- Managing Stress
- Mindfulness
- Goal Setting



Week 3

- Solution focus feedback on goal set
- Gratitude Diary
- Managing Fatigue
- Sleeping Better
- Goal Setting

Week 4

- Solution focus feedback on goal set
- Gratitude Diary
- Body changes, Sexuality and intimacy
- Communication
- Goal Setting



Week 5

- Solution focus feedback on goal set
- Gratitude Diary
- Facing the future with HOPE
- Get active, Feel good
- Goal Setting

Week 6

- Solution focus feedback on goal set
- Gratitude Diary
- Character strengths
- Priorities and values
- Open space forum
- Sharing our success / word cloud



In 2016 the HOPE course was highly rated by all of the patients who attended.

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“As the weeks went on, the HOPE Course made me more relaxed. I have more energy, patience and I mix more. I've really learnt to pace myself and do more. It really changed my life” (Cancer survivor)

How to register for a HOPE COURSE.

To register or for more information including dates and times for the current years HOPE courses please phone the **West Suffolk Hospital Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre on 01284 713023** (calls left out of hours will be returned within two working days)

Alternatively email: cancer.infocentre@wsh.nhs.uk

HOPE courses have been held in Bury St Edmunds, Sudbury, Stowmarket and Thetford.

After registering we will contact you closer to the date of the next HOPE course.



Refreshments are available during all sessions.

Remember - the HOPE experience doesn't finish when the HOPE course ends.

Questions asked.

If you.....

- are back at work or planning to return to work and wish to do the HOPE course, we may be able to help.....
- are not sure the HOPE course is right for you.....
- feel that the HOPE course may really help someone close to you.....
- think you'd like to try the first session of the course and see how it goes.....
- want to talk to someone who's been on a HOPE course or meet one of the course facilitators.....
- have any other questions.....

..... please talk with one of the Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Centre team.

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Take Control Workshop

If you are interested in the HOPE course but you can't commit to all six weeks then please ask about a short Take Control Workshop which uses parts of the full HOPE course in one single 3 hour session.

Carers Course

If you are caring for a close friend or relative with cancer please ask about a HOPE Carers Course. The HOPE Carers Course is like the HOPE cancer patients course but it is just for carers of people living with cancer.



“During treatment or needing support after your treatment has finished, the HOPE course provides a safe place to ask awkward questions and express any fears.



HOPE courses help to reverse the negative spiral that cancer can bring and it gives positive techniques to take forward. It's life-enriching”.
(HOPE course facilitator)

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Contact us

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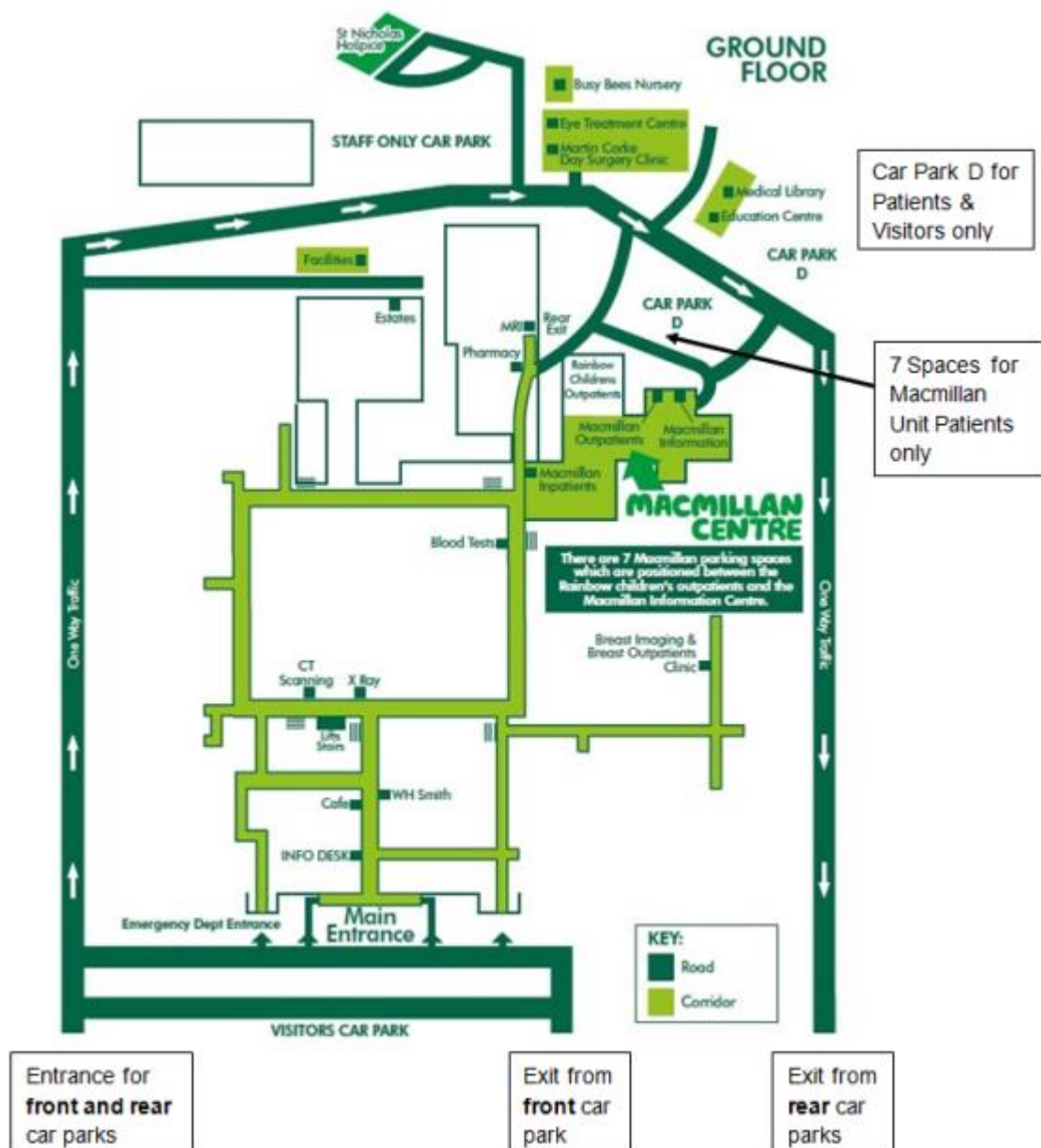
Postal Address Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Centre
 West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
 Hardwick Lane
 Bury St Edmunds
 Suffolk IP33 2QZ

Telephone 01284 713023

Email address cancer.infocentre@wsh.nhs.uk

Link to webpage [Macmillan Cancer Information & Support Service at West Suffolk](#)

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