

Aspirant Lung Cancer Clinical Nurse Specialist Pilot Programme- The Manchester Royal Infirmary

Background

In 2022 the Lung Cancer CNS team at the Manchester Royal Infirmary took part in a pilot scheme to introduce an aspirant clinical specialist nurse programme. The Aspirant nurse programme was run by MFT and GM cancer and funded by HEE. Several trusts across GM were running a similar pilot- amongst different cancer groups and some rotating around cancer groups. However, the pilot scheme at the Manchester Royal Infirmary was solely with the Lung Cancer CNS

Method

A Band 5 Staff nurse was seconded for 7.5 hours per week from the Respiratory ward to the Lung CNS Team. The programme included comprehensive competency framework, an e-learning programme and had a mentor from the Lung CNS team. The nurse also undertook project work to analyse training needs of ward staff, spoke placements.

Aims of the Programme:

- Create support for the CNS team through project management.
- Establish better ward relationships.
- Create CPD Opportunities that may not be presented to ward staff,
- Create teaching experience for more junior members of the CNS team.
- Comprehensive Core Competencies booklet used to facilitate and evidence learning outcomes.
- Succession planning for CNS teams
 - Staff Retention/Recruitment
 - Access to academic learning through HEE

The CNS team:

Had an opportunity to develop a member of Staff over the course of a year and had extra support during a time of chronic short staffing due to maternity leave and sickness.



The Ward:

Retention of staff the nurse stayed on the ward for nearly two years after being accepted onto the Aspirant CNS programme, waiting for the Programme to commence and then while taking part in the programme. She remains working within Trust.

Spokes

The spokes involved also gave the nurse insight into the patient experience. For instance, going to see procedures such as EBUS (Endobronchial Ultrasound) gave an understanding of what patients go through during tests, including preparation, what happened in the procedure and the aftercare.

Competency Themes

1. Anatomy, physiology, prevalence and epidemiology
2. Psychological care
3. Communication
4. Consent
5. Holistic Needs Assessment
6. Multidisciplinary team working and interdisciplinary working
7. Clinical trials and application of research
8. Screening and health promotion
9. Diagnosis
10. Systemic anti-cancer treatments and supportive medications (SACT)
11. Follow up
12. Palliative care and end of life care
13. Leadership

The Nurse:

Gained valuable experience and opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the Cancer CNS role and Lung Cancer. Gained confidence and communication skills used on the ward, clinics and telephone, with patients, family members and the MDT. Undertook a training needs analysis project for the ward.

The Patients:

Opportunities for continuity of care for some patients, both in clinic and on the ward.

Examples of enhancing patient experience

The Aspirant nurse was able to facilitate a patient's admission to the ward from the outpatient's clinic

The aspirant nurse was present for a patient who attended for a fine needle aspiration as an outpatient in the lung cancer clinic through to providing end of life care on the ward

A patient cared for on the ward by the aspirant nurse who then went onto the Lung Cancer Pathway. The aspirant nurse was able to offer explanation and reassurance as their nurse on the ward for what would happen and was able to follow up their needs after discharge.

E-learning Topics

1. The context of cancer nursing
 2. Basic science and treatment of cancer
 3. Nursing assessment and interventions in the management of people affected by cancer
- Cancer as a chronic illness/supportive and palliative care. Understanding impact of cancer on the individual, families and health care professionals
- Information and communication in cancer care. Clinical leadership and resource management of cancer nursing
- Evidence-based and applied research in cancer care

Conclusion:

The programme was deemed a success leading to a smooth transition to the CNS team when a vacancy arose. This project demonstrated positive outcomes across multiple dimensions. The impact was enhanced patient care, improved competence, positive communication, increased awareness of patient experiences, professional growth, and experience, contributed to staff retention.

