



# BREAST CANCER NOW'S SERVICE PLEDGE

Improving breast cancer services for you.



# WHAT'S BREAST CANCER NOW'S SERVICE PLEDGE?

**Breast Cancer Now is the UK's leading research and support charity.** We're always working to improve treatment, care and services for anyone affected by breast cancer.

**Our Service Pledge is dedicated to improving breast cancer services.**

We help hospitals gather feedback from patients and staff on their breast care services. Then, together with patients and staff, we come up with a plan to act on that feedback and create positive change.



## THE SERVICE PLEDGE AT WHITTINGTON HEALTH NHS TRUST

We wanted to find out what was important to patients at your NHS Trust. So we carried out surveys and focus groups to hear what you had to say.

Working together with patient representatives and members of the trust's breast cancer team, we created goals based on this feedback.

**Now, Whittington Health NHS Trust is taking action.** Some goals are ongoing. But there are changes in place that are already making a real difference for breast cancer patients.

Here's the feedback and changes that your trust is making:



YOUR FEEDBACK	ACTION PLAN	PROGRESS
<b>Patients didn't always feel they were offered enough support and information at diagnosis</b>	We now follow up with all patients a week after their diagnosis to offer further support and information	<b>Completed</b>
	We offer patients a referral into Breast Cancer Now's Here for You pathway, so they can get the right support at the right time	<b>Completed</b>
	We give all patients Breast Cancer Now's helpline cards and relevant information leaflets at diagnosis	<b>Completed</b>
	We'll create videos to help patients better understand what will happen after diagnosis, and we'll offer the option to request health information in video format	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Some patients weren't told that they could bring someone to their diagnosis appointments, which led to some people receiving the news alone</b>	We now actively encourage all patients to bring someone with them to their diagnosis appointments. To support this, we've updated all letter templates and their wording to make the message clear	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Some primary breast cancer patients felt their surgeons didn't take into account their preferences when discussing surgical options</b>	We support patients through sensitive discussions about surgical options, offering guidance and referrals to organisations like Flat Friends or Restore UK, based on their choices	<b>Completed</b>
	We'll actively refer patients to Breast Cancer Now's Someone like Me service, where they can speak with a trained volunteer who's undergone the same surgery to help them know what to expect	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Secondary breast cancer patients would have liked more information on how to look after themselves after surgery</b>	We visit secondary breast cancer patients after surgery to provide relevant information and after-care support	<b>Completed</b>



YOUR FEEDBACK	ACTION PLAN	PROGRESS
Some primary breast cancer patients felt they didn't receive enough information on how to look after themselves after surgery, and wanted more support with lymphoedema, wound care and managing drains	We provide all patients with aftercare information through their digital pre-operative assessment app, covering topics like drain care, wound management and arm exercises	Completed
	We consistently refer patients with lymphoedema to the lymphoedema clinic, and communicate how long they might need to wait for an appointment	Ongoing
	We've created a new resource to help patients better understand and manage surgical drains after their surgery	Completed
Some patients found it hard to get in touch with a member of staff when they needed information or support	We review and triage all texts, emails and calls to make sure patients with urgent concerns get a fast response	Completed
Some patients didn't feel their care was as joined up as it could have been	We offer advanced communication training to all staff	Completed
	We'll streamline phone communication to improve integration of care	Ongoing
	We'll recruit a lead breast care nurse role to support the breast team's integration and make sure care feels more joined up	Ongoing
Some primary and secondary breast cancer patients would like access to more emotional support	We have a volunteer at the chemotherapy unit providing emotional support	Completed
	We offer level 2 psychological support skills training to breast nurses, so they can give patients the best emotional support possible	Completed
	We offer our breast nurses the opportunity to attend clinical supervision sessions with the lead psychologist to help maintain their level 2 psychological support skills	Completed



YOUR FEEDBACK	ACTION PLAN	PROGRESS
<b>Some patients weren't offered a Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) during their care, and others were unsure whether they had received an HNA</b>	We'll clearly explain to patients what HNAs are and why they're important. And we'll make sure patients know they can ask for an HNA at any time	<b>Completed</b>
	We've improved one of our quiet rooms in the chemotherapy unit that's often used for care planning, by adding new furniture, plants and blinds to make it more private and comfortable. We've also started improving the second quiet room in the outpatient clinic area with new furniture	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Secondary breast cancer patients were less likely to feel they had ongoing support from a nurse than primary breast cancer patients</b>	We've recruited a new breast cancer nurse	<b>Completed</b>
	We follow up with secondary breast cancer patients at critical times to identify their needs	<b>Completed</b>
	We'll assign each breast nurse a specific role to cover all areas of care once the new lead breast nurse is recruited	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Primary breast cancer patients didn't always feel they had enough support at the end of their treatment</b>	We'll create more accessible sources of information, including videos about late treatment side effects and menopausal symptoms	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Some secondary breast cancer patients would have liked more information about planning for the future, palliative care and hospice support</b>	We'll explore if Breast Cancer Now's Living with Secondary Breast Cancer support group is suitable for the service and its patients	<b>Ongoing</b>
	We've attended palliative care training so we can better communicate with and support patients	<b>Completed</b>
	We've enhanced our communication with patients about palliative care to make sure they clearly understand its purpose and benefits	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Not all primary breast cancer patients received a treatment summary</b>	We've identified how many treatment summaries need to be completed, and will take steps to increase the number given to primary breast cancer patients at the end of their treatment	<b>Ongoing</b>



## HAVE QUESTIONS OR FEEDBACK?



Get in touch with **Gemma Ingram-Adams**  
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If you need support or information about breast cancer, call the Breast Cancer Now helpline on **0808 800 6000** or visit **[breastcancernow.org](https://breastcancernow.org)**.

### Breast Cancer Now

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**Whittington Health**  
NHS Trust

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