

## Useful Royal Sussex County Hospital numbers (see front page for main numbers)

Howard 1 Ward	01273 696955 ext 4051
Worthing Oncology Dept	01903 205111 ext 4225
Eastbourne Oncology Dept	01323 435813
Macmillan Counsellor	01273 664694

For local support groups please speak to a member of staff

### Useful National Contacts

**Macmillan:** [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk) 0808 808 00 00

**Macmillan benefits helpline:** 0808 801 0304

**Cancer Help (Cancer Research):** 0808 800 4040  
[www.cancerhelp.org.uk](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk)

**Sussex Cancer Network:** [www.sussexcancer.nhs.uk](http://www.sussexcancer.nhs.uk)

**NHS Patient Choices Website:**  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/radiotherapy/pages/introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/radiotherapy/pages/introduction.aspx)

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#### Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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If you do not understand this leaflet, we can arrange for an interpreter.

إذا كنت لا تستطيع فهم محتويات هذه النشرة فإمكاننا عمل الترتيبات لتوفير مترجم شفوي لك.

এই প্রচারপুস্তিকাটি যদি আপনি বুঝতে না পারেন, তবে আপনার জন্য আমরা একজন অনুবাদকের ব্যবস্থা করে দিতে পারি।

如你不懂白本單張的內容，我們可安排口譯員服務。

如你不懂白本傳單的內容，我們可安排口譯員服務。

اگر مندرجات این جزوه را نمیفهمید، ما می‌توانیم مترجم در اختیارتان بگذاریم.

Jeśli masz trudności w zrozumieniu tej ulotki, możemy zorganizować tłumacza.

# Planning your Radiotherapy treatment

## The Sussex Cancer Centre

### Patient Information

BSUH Sussex Cancer Centre  
The Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton  
[www.bsuh.nhs.uk/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/)

**Main Reception telephone: 01273 696955 extn. 4324**  
**Radiotherapy reception telephone: 01273 664901**  
**Chemotherapy reception telephone: 01273 664799**

## What happens after your planning session?

At your first planning appointment the Radiographer will give you the date and time your treatment will start.

The information gathered at your planning appointment is passed to the planning team. The planning team is made up of Dosimetrists, Radiographers and Physicists. Your Oncologist and the planning team create a radiotherapy treatment plan that is specially designed for each individual. Therefore, be aware there will be a period of time, usually 2-4 weeks, between your planning appointment and start of treatment.

**If you have any questions about the planning of your treatment please call and speak to a Radiographer**

Please see the back page for contact details.

## What is Radiotherapy?

Your Oncologist, a specialist cancer doctor, has prescribed a course of External Beam Radiotherapy for you. Radiotherapy is a carefully controlled treatment for cancer using high energy x-rays. It works by destroying cancer cells in the area being treated. Normal cells in the area can be damaged by radiotherapy too, which can cause some side effects. Damage to normal cells is mostly temporary. Radiotherapy treatment itself is painless.

Radiotherapy is very precise and it is vital that we plan your treatment with great care and accuracy. It can be given using a single beam of radiation or a number of beams given from different directions. Your treatment will be planned specifically for you and this will require at least one, sometimes more, visits to the department before your treatment starts.

A course of radiotherapy may vary from one single treatment to 40 treatments given over 6 or 7 weeks. **It is important that you attend all of your treatments.** For most people this will be daily Monday to Friday.

## What is Planning?

Radiotherapy is planned using a CT (computerised tomography) scan. This scan provides information to help your Oncologist decide the exact area for treatment.

A treatment planning visit will usually take less than one hour. On these days, unless you are directed otherwise, please eat and drink as normal and take any medications that are prescribed for you.

**You will not be given any treatment during these planning sessions.**

## **What if I am having treatment to the head and neck area?**

Patients who are having treatment to the head and neck area will have an immobilisation mask made especially for them before any planning appointment. This mask will be worn for all planning and treatment appointments.

Pen marks will be drawn on the mask, instead of the skin, during the planning appointment. The mask is used to help the Radiographers set you in exactly the same position each day and to treat you with pinpoint accuracy.

Some head and neck patients will also need a small permanent mark put on their chest and the radiographers will tell you if this needs to be done.

## **Will I have more than one planning visit?**

Additional appointments in the CT scanner are sometimes necessary and you should not worry if you are asked to come back to the CT scanner. This can be before your treatment starts or during your course of treatment. These additional appointments are usually in order to check and/or make adjustments to the details of your treatment.

## **What is a CT Scan?**

A CT scanner uses low energy radiation to create images of the inside of your body.

The Radiographers will help you get in a suitable position on the couch. This is the same position you will be in for each of your treatments. Small pen marks will be drawn on your skin and markers that show up on the CT images will be taped to your skin.

You will be alone in the room for about 5 minutes while the scan is being done but the Radiographers will be watching you the whole time through a special glass window. The couch will pass slowly through the hole in the middle of the scanner. It is not an enclosed hole. The machine will not touch you and you will not feel anything while having the scan.

The Radiographers may be in and out of the room taking measurements and recording information. They will also apply some permanent marks to your skin.

## **What are permanent marks?**

At your planning session the Radiographers will put some tiny permanent marks on your skin. This is done using tattoo ink and a small fine needle. They will remain there for life but they are very small and discrete. These marks enable us to treat you more accurately. It also means that you can wash and shower as usual over the course of your treatment.