

What is an HNA?

A Holistic Needs Assessment (HNA) is an assessment and discussion you may have with someone from your healthcare team. Together, you talk through what matters most to you. You then agree on a plan for your care and support needs.

It is called holistic because you can discuss any needs or concerns you have about any area of your life. It is not only about the physical symptoms of cancer or the side effects of treatment, but what matters most to you. These concerns can be:

- **Your physical symptoms:** such as pain, tiredness, bowel or bladder problems, and weight changes.
- **Your treatment:** such as side effects, fertility and the risks and benefits of treatment.
- **Your emotions:** for example, fear of cancer coming back or the effect of cancer on your relationships.
- **Your sexual well-being:** such as concerns about intimacy, getting an erection or low sex drive.
- **Your family:** such as how to talk about cancer, or whether your family are at risk of getting it.
- **Your well-being after treatment:** for example, giving up smoking, eating healthily or staying active.
- **Follow-up appointments, tests:** you may need and knowing what symptoms to look out for.
- **Work, money and housing:** for example, advice about working during treatment, benefits and financial help.
- **Practical issues:** such as how to manage housework and where to get aids and equipment to help you.
- **Spirituality:** such as your faith or beliefs and whether your cancer experience has affected these.

Remember the concerns we have listed above are only a guide. Not everything listed will apply to you. Or you may have concerns that are not listed

Who do I have the HNA with?

You have the HNA with someone from your healthcare team; this can be your clinical nurse specialist (CNS) or cancer support worker (CSW). They can be your main contact for information and advice because they have the skills and experience to help you identify your needs and talk about them with you. They also have up-to-date knowledge of local and national services and can refer you to other support services you may need.

When does the HNA happen?

You may be offered an HNA around the time when you are diagnosed, during treatment or after treatment has ended. If you are not offered an HNA, you can ask someone from your healthcare

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team to arrange one for you. Because your needs may change, you can ask for another HNA at any time.

Your care plan

During the discussion, you and your CNS/CSW will agree on the best ways to manage your needs and concerns. They may write down what you have agreed in a document called a care plan, sometimes called a personalised care and support plan, you will be given a copy to keep.

Your care plan will record:

- The main concerns you talked about
- Suggestions and actions to help you manage your concerns
- Services that may be able to support you, and any referrals that are made
- What is already being done to help – for example, the services you are already using
- Information about who to contact if you need more help
- Details of other health or social care professionals you have agreed to share the information with.

If you have any questions regarding the HNA that you would like to discuss please contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist or Cancer Support Worker.

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.