

The value of the CNS role in service delivery and innovation: patient perspectives

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Background:

- Patient experience is defined as the range of interactions that patients have with the health-care systems, including care providers and health-care facilities. It is increasingly gaining attention as one of the key parameters used to drive quality improvement in health-care services (Abdalla and Pavlova 2023). The aim of this patient feedback questionnaire was to gain a better understanding of how our patients perceived their Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) and if they would be open to expanding our services further with more CNS Nurse-led Consultation Clinics.
- The patient feedback questionnaire was devised to accommodate all Haematology patients with a variety of malignant blood cancers and non-malignant blood disorders to assess if they have had support from a designated CNS, had access to a CNS Nurse-led Clinic, what their thoughts were regarding this and if they would be interested in participating in this type of service in the future.
- Following the collection of this information we plan to utilise this information to make a business plan to expand our CNS team, to accommodate the increased patient workload over the last few years.

Method:

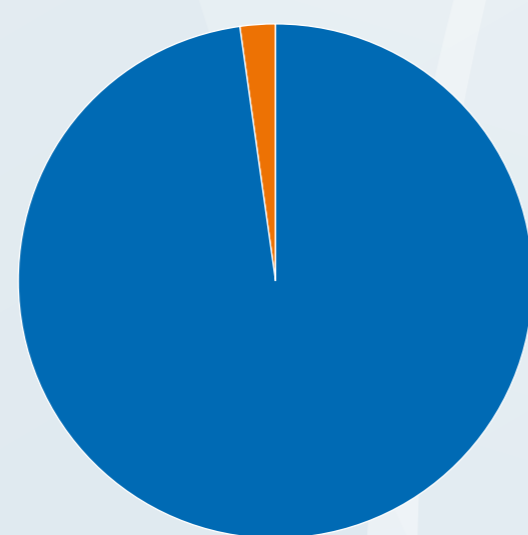
- Microsoft forms was used to establish the questionnaire format which enabled the questionnaire to be anonymous. This was reviewed by the patient experience team at UHB to ensure all patient inclusion questions were written in the correct format.
- This was then emailed out to a variety of malignant and non-malignant patients, from details held on our patient Clinical Portal Database.
- We also printed the questionnaires and provided paper copies to patients attending their consultant-led outpatient appointments. Patients completed the questionnaires and were advised to submit them in an anonymous patient questionnaire box once completed. This allowed for inclusion of patients who did not have digital access to the patient questionnaire.
- The study took place over a 4-month period and we received 92 responses.

Main aims:

The key findings in this feedback questionnaire were the following:

5. Do you know who your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker is?

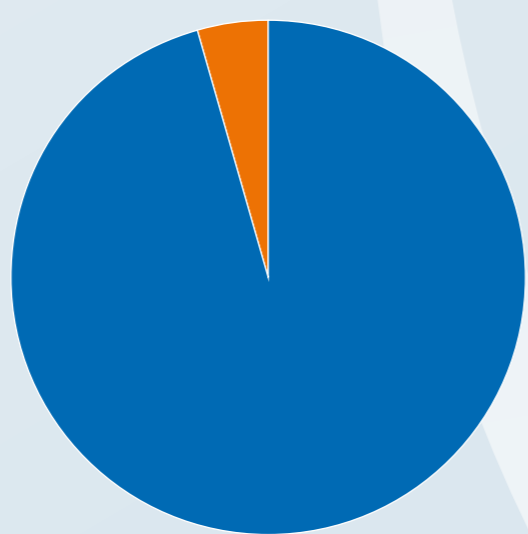
- **Yes** 89
- **No** 2
- **Maybe** 0



Patient comment 'I have had 2 excellent Clinical Nurse Specialists and can't speak highly enough of them - always there to answer questions and support me. Think they do a fantastic job.'

6. Have you had contact with your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker?

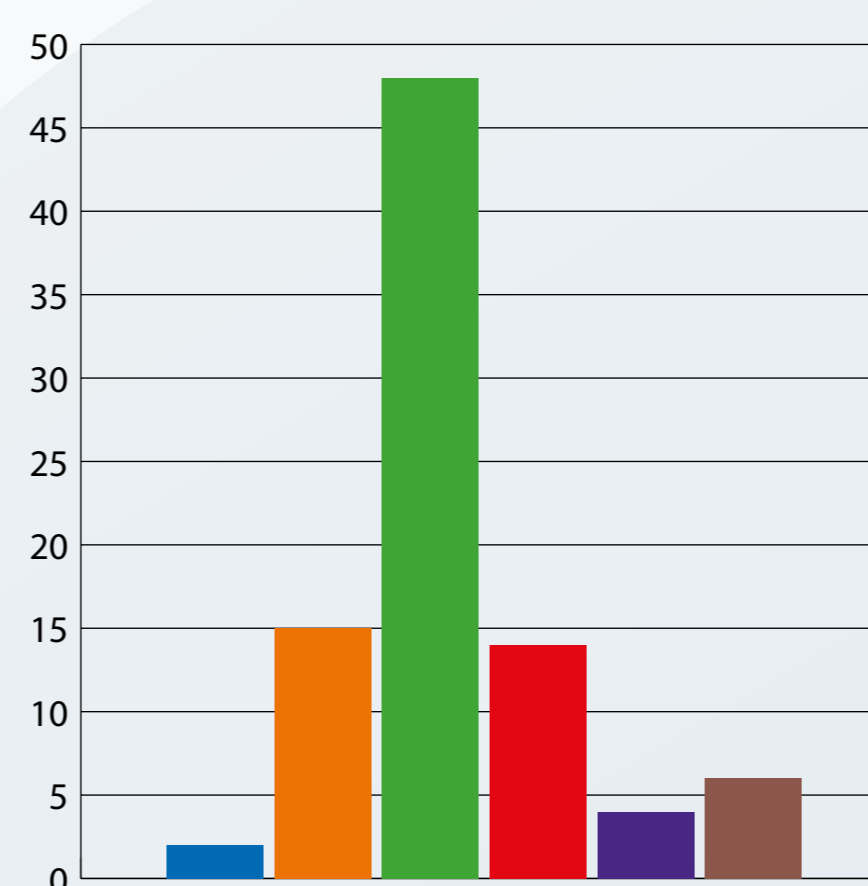
- **Yes** 86
- **No** 4
- **Maybe** 0



Patient comment 'Anything I needed was dealt with. I cannot praise them enough during a very difficult time.'

7. How often do you contact your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker?

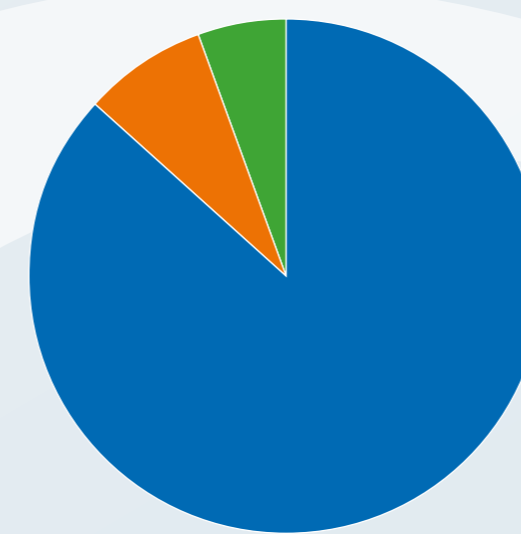
- **Daily** 2
- **Weekly** 15
- **Monthly** 48
- **Seasonal** 14
- **Yearly** 4
- **Never** 6



Patient Comment: 'I have always found accessing my CNS very efficient, whether by phone or text. Any problems I have experienced usually occur when my CNS is away. However, another CNS will deal with my concerns.'

8. How useful do you find the Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker service?

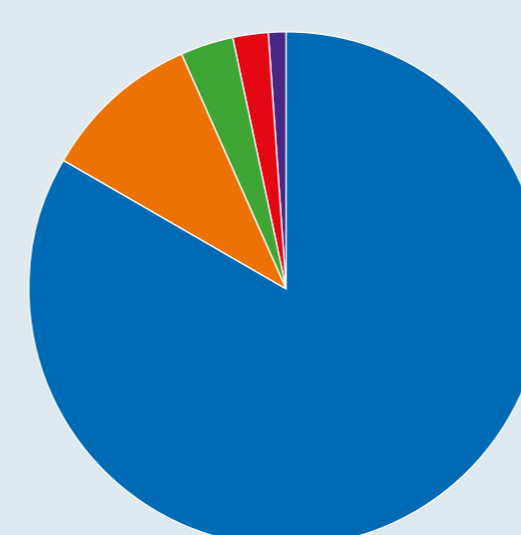
- **Extremely useful** 79
- **Somewhat useful** 7
- **Neutral** 5
- **Somewhat not useful** 0
- **Extremely not useful** 0



Patient comment 'My clinical nurse is very knowledgeable about my condition, and I think nurses are underpaid'.

9. How supported do you feel by your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker?

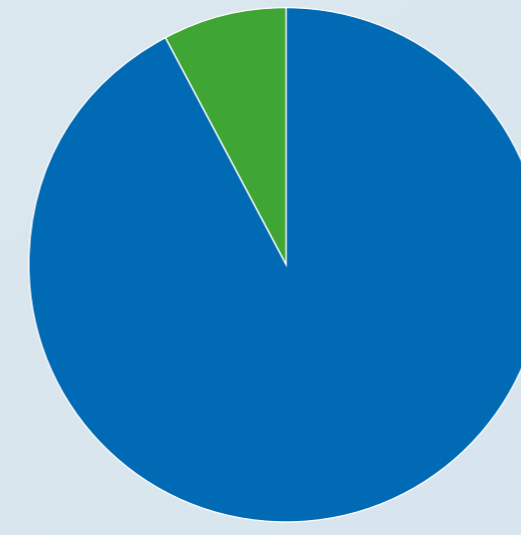
- **Extremely** 76
- **Somewhat** 9
- **Neutral** 3
- **Somewhat unsupported** 2
- **Unsupported** 1



Patient comment: 'My experience with Lida has been fantastic, she's exemplary! Having a condition like TTP is very scary and you need medical staff around you who you feel you can trust, quite literally with your life and I trust her judgement and knowledge implicitly.'

10. Do you feel confident and comfortable to discuss your treatment plan and holistic (social, spiritual, financial and psychological) issues with your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker?

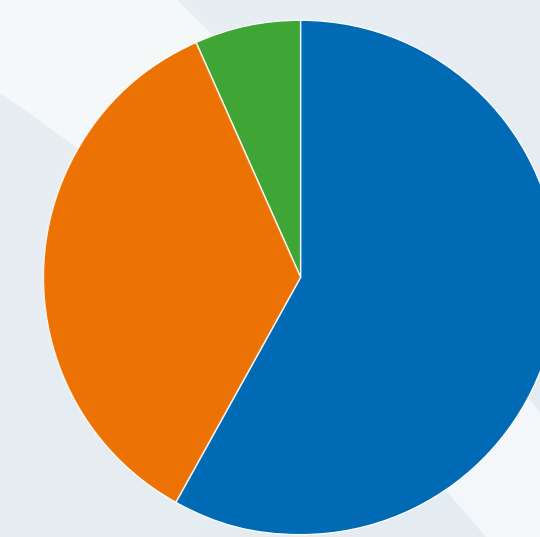
- **Yes** 84
- **No** 0
- **Maybe** 7



Patient Comment: 'My Clinical Nurse Specialist has been supportive, professional, friendly, approachable and knowledgeable throughout the process.'

12. Have you ever attended a Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker Nurse-led Clinic face-to-face or telephone clinic?

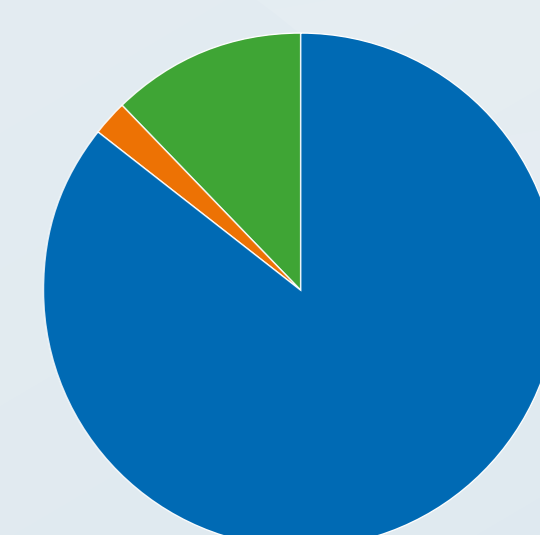
- **Yes** 53
- **No** 32
- **Maybe** 6



Patient Comment: 'My Clinical Nurse is extremely good and keeps me well informed and explains everything about my treatment.'

13. If you could be reviewed by your Clinical Nurse Specialist/Key Worker in a Nurse-led clinic face-to-face or telephone clinic, would you be open to this?

- **Yes** 78
- **No** 2
- **Maybe** 11



Patient comment: 'I think the CNS could be empowered more and utilised better, therefore increasing capacity across the whole service. CNS could run their own clinics, especially for uncomplicated patients where the treatment is quite routine. When advice is needed then the issue could be escalated to the consultant level.'

Conclusion:

- In conclusion, the graphs show that the majority of patients knew who their allocated disease specific CNS was and were able to contact them when required. Most patients had contact with their CNS on a monthly basis and found our service extremely useful. The patient-CNS relationship allowed for patients to feel more confident and comfortable to discuss sensitive holistic issues compared with a Haematology Consultant consultation.
- Some patients commented that they felt more comfortable and confident to discuss sensitive holistic issues with their CNS, compared to their Haematology Consultant.
- These results have improved our CNS NLC telephone consultations and now offer patients the option of a face-to-face or telephone follow up consultation. Alongside this we plan to devise a visual poster with CNS photos and contact details to be displayed in Haematology outpatient areas and inpatient wards to promote our service.
- All the data collected from these patient feedback questionnaires will be used to highlight the value of the CNS team in improving service delivery for patients and will help us to formulate evidence for a business case to increase CNS numbers to better manage our patients and workload.

References:

- Association of patient experience and the quality of hospital care. Abdalla and Pavlova (2023) International Journal for Quality in Health Care, Volume 35, Issue 3, 2023, mzad047, <https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzad047>
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