

...What people learn can help them directly with the stress of cancer, help manage symptoms and side effects of treatment and can help in every day life. Underpinning all the services at Maggie's is the opportunity for people to live better with cancer and to meet others who understand their situation.

### Context

Since 1996, Maggie's Centres have been pioneering a new concept of cancer support in the UK. Maggie's provides help, information and support to people affected by cancer to enable them to manage the process of diagnosis and treatment as effectively as possible and to enjoy the best possible quality of life.

Maggie's was founded by writer on Chinese gardens, the late Maggie Keswick Jencks and her husband Charles Jencks, a landscape designer and world-renowned architectural critic and writer. Maggie's vision was to provide high quality support for people affected by cancer in a stimulating and welcoming environment. The resulting collaboration with well-known architects such as Frank Gehry, Zaha Hadid, Richard Rogers and his Rogers, Stirk, Harbour + Partners team have continued this vision with the ongoing design of further centres.

Since the opening of the first building, Maggie's has embarked on an ambitious programme which will now extend access to the Maggie's support network into England and Wales as well as broadening facilities in Scotland.

### Cancer support at Maggie's

There is growing evidence to show that the emotional state of cancer patients, and that of their family and friends, can influence their cancer experience, treatment and recovery. In addition to a lack of access to information, some people affected by cancer may have anxieties or stress as a result of their diagnosis and prognosis. In 2005, the Department of Health's report *Tackling Cancer: improving the patient journey* highlighted significant psychological distress in patients diagnosed with cancer with approximately one-third of those surveyed experiencing severe enough symptoms to require help in coping. Additionally, many of the cancer patients surveyed had reported that they thought more could have been done to assist with their anxiety or depression (DoH 2005). By applying basic principles of psychological management, a great deal of distress can be prevented and the use of simple, self-help interventions can enhance quality of life (Golant et al 2003, Walker 1999). Maggie's core programme is therefore based around providing information, emotional, stress and relaxation support within an environment designed specifically to contribute to wellbeing.

These statistics lead to the conclusion that many patients may benefit from psychosocial support during and after their cancer treatment by improving their quality of life and helping with coping strategies and treatment compliance. More recent research has indicated that there may be beneficial results through minimising chemo-induced immunosuppression and improved clinical and pathological

response. Since Maggie's was launched over ten years ago, research demonstrating the important benefits of psychosocial support and wellbeing has grown, but it is expected that the next ten years will provide further evidence in helping and improving the outcomes of cancer patients (Cunningham 2005, Walker et al 2005, Walker et al 1999).

### NHS policy and Maggie's

The emerging evidence has added weight to the provision of appropriate, high quality and accessible information and emotional support for all cancer patients. This has been clearly recognised by the Government and UK health organisations, as demonstrated in the recommendations, first in the NHS Cancer Plan 2000 and then in the NICE Guidance on Supportive and Palliative Care 2004. This is reinforced in the Cancer Reform Strategy 2007, which highlights the need to support and empower people through and beyond their cancer journey and states the importance of recognising the voluntary organisations that provide high quality, innovative support services for cancer patients and survivors. The report uses Maggie's as the case study of how this is done.

### Maggie's programme of support

Maggie's centres are for anyone affected by cancer to 'drop-in' whenever they choose. Walking through the door people are greeted by a cancer professional who will help them in the ways that they need most. Maggie's helps people to be as healthy in mind and body as possible and has an exciting and varied programme of support including workshops, courses such as living with less stress, nutrition and health, living with cancer, group and individual help. Maggie's aim is to help people to discover and develop their own strengths and learn new skills as they live with and beyond cancer.

### Information

It is known that people affected by cancer at any time have varying informational needs. The provision of information and help in understanding such information has been demonstrated to be a key element in decreasing anxiety and uncertainty, regaining a sense of control (Mallinger et al 2005). The aim is to provide personalised information for their particular situation. Advice is not given regarding individual treatment plans but help is given to clarify people's understanding and to formulate questions, which they can take back to their health care team.

It is recognised that many people receive excellent and clear information directly from their health care team and there may not be huge gaps that need support. However having the additional opportunity to access a Maggie's Centre for information can be an

important means of people gradually beginning to talk about the psychological impact of a cancer diagnosis at a pace which is tailored to the individual. This combination of providing support through information and also using it as a vehicle to elicit fears and concerns remains a fundamental aspect of Maggie's core programme.

Each Maggie's Centre has a library and utilises information provided by other cancer charities such as Macmillan, Cancerbackup, Breast Cancer Care and the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation.

### Mind and emotions

The impact of cancer can be felt very strongly. Many people experience feelings of isolation, loss of control and helplessness as well as anxiety, fear, depression and uncertainty. Talking with professional and experienced staff at Maggie's can help to make these feelings more manageable and enable people to learn new ways of dealing with them.

### Maggie's support groups

Underpinning all the services at Maggie's is the opportunity for people to meet others with whom they can identify, either around the kitchen table or in any of the workshops or support groups. To hear personal stories of how others have overcome cancer obstacles can be one of the most powerful means of helping people build the self belief or self efficacy that they too can take on the challenge (Helgeson et al 2006). Evidence consistently emphasises the importance of helping people build the self efficacy to face cancer challenges (Kreitler et al 2006). Cancer support groups have been shown to complement and enhance the supportive relationships a person may have amongst family and friends through providing a sense of belonging and mutuality (Ussher et al 2006).

### Relaxation, visualisation and stress management

Through the Maggie's programme people can learn to deal effectively with stress and to live with more confidence and determination. What people learn can help them directly with the stress of cancer, help manage symptoms and side effects of treatment and can help in everyday life.

### Stress reduction and mindfulness

Over its existence Maggie's has developed a mindfulness and cognitive behavioural stress reduction programme, which is delivered by clinical psychologists in a group or individual format. Evidence consistently supports the importance of such intervention in enhancing the quality of life and coping abilities for people at all stages of the cancer experience or as a carer (Lee et al. 2006, Smith JE et al 2005).

### Physical activity and fatigue management

The evidence base for the efficacy of physical fitness programmes for cancer patients is growing, with a number of studies affirming the beneficial effects of exercise on a person's physical wellbeing, fatigue management and quality of life (Campbell et al 2005, Drake et al 2004). Maggie's assists people to incorporate physical activities in their lifestyle through the opportunity to take part in T'ai Chi sessions, fatigue management workshops and group or individual psychological sessions to build the confidence to take exercise again.

### Environment

Our physical environment can affect our behaviour. Well-designed and positively experienced environments have been shown to enhance quality of life and a person's ability to cope with stress (Dilani 2004, Kirklin & Richardson 2003). Maggie's Centres are specifically designed to be non-institutional and welcoming; a warm, open building centred round a kitchen gives a sense of home and informality. Our architects have been asked to create buildings and spaces that feel warm and supportive whilst also being stimulating and adventurous. This helps to inspire people to explore the things they can do to help themselves to live beyond the dominance of cancer in their lives.

### The Maggie's Centres

The first Maggie's Centre opened in 1996 at the Western General Hospital in Edinburgh, where Maggie was treated for her cancer. Since then a further five buildings have opened, with the sixth Centre opening in April 2008 in London, designed by the architects Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners.

The London centre is the first of six centres planned for construction in England and Wales. The centre has been designed by the prestigious and internationally recognised Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners and is located in a prominent position on the site of the Charing Cross Hospital, Hammersmith.

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*"Maggie's London is the first support centre in London to provide psychological and emotional support for all cancer patients, their families and carers. To my knowledge, there is nothing else like it. This is a unique and really exciting concept. I feel certain my patients will benefit from it."*

Professor Charles Coombes, Professor of Cancer Medicine, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, London

*"As an oncologist I know that no one underestimates the difficulties involved in receiving the news that one has cancer. The emotional trauma can be just as difficult as the physical effect. Maggie's Centres help in a way that is a natural extension of our clinical work. For our cancer patients what Maggie's does is vital."*

Professor Bob Leonard, Clinical Director, Cancer Services, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, London

*"All patients with cancer are frightened at the beginning. They then become valiant and in most cases heroes. Our new Maggie's Centre will support this process. I am delighted that it will be modern and even hip. Thank you for helping us at Imperial."*

Dr Mark Glaser, Chief of Service, Clinical Oncology, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

# maggie's

## cancer caring centres

Medical Background

### Other Maggie's Centres operating:

Edinburgh 1996 (Richard Murphy)  
Glasgow 2002 (Page and Park)  
Dundee 2003 (Frank Gehry)  
Highlands 2005 (Page and Park)  
Fife 2006 (Zaha Hadid)  
London 2008 (Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners)

### Maggie's Centres – centres planned to be built by 2012:

Cotswolds (Sir Richard MacCormac)  
Gartnaval (Office for Metropolitan Architecture)  
Lanarkshire (Reiach & Hall)  
Nottingham (Piers Gough)  
North-East (Foreign Office Architects)  
Oxford (Wilkinson Eyre)  
South-West Wales (Kisho Kurokawa)

Through Maggie's programme people can learn to live with more confidence and determination