

# Onco-geriatrics in supportive care: innovative implementation within a tertiary referral centre

## Introduction

- In 2023, **Cancer Enhanced Supportive Care (CESC)** was introduced at Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre (serving a population of almost one million).
- Eligible patients included those with incurable Upper Gastrointestinal, Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary and Lung cancers having systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT)
- An onco-geriatrician was enlisted to support the service.

## Methodology:

### Initial CESC one hour assessment

with completion of three surveys - IPOS (Integrated Palliative Care Outcome Score, CSNAT (Carer Support Needs Assessment Tool) and patient experience survey.



### Weekly MDT

(CNSs, palliative care consultant and specialty doctor, onco-geriatrician and clinical fellow, dietician, hospice staff, Macmillan, physiotherapist and occupational therapist).



### Onco-geriatricians

Provide advice at the MDT

Follow-up medically complex or frailer patients (telephone or face-to-face) using a Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) framework.

### Measure

Demographics

Healthcare utilisation in the last year of life (LYOL) compared against a baseline population

## Results:

**Onco –geri data collected:** primary diagnosis, age, Rockwood Clinical Frailty Scale (CFS), IPOS, Australian Karnofsky Performance Scale (AKPS), number of onco-geriatrician input episodes and nature of advice given

### Data at a glance:

- **97 patients** seen by service between April to November 2023
- **Median age 68 years** with an **average CFS of 5 (mild frailty)** range 2-9 (well – terminally ill)
- 7 patients required CGA face to face appointments

BLOODSUGAR  
CHRONICDISEASE  
**MEDICATIONREVIEW**  
ACUTEILLNESS  
HBA1C CORTISOL  
LIVERFAILURE ACP  
TFTS STOOLS  
PSYCHO-SOCIAL  
PEG  
ANTICOAGULATION

Patient and professional service feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

“...so good to be able to sit down with a consultant...and have such a thorough conversation. Something I felt I hadn't had before.”

CESC service user

“This team has transformed care for many of our patients - it is a fantastic adjunct to our clinic and offers patients the level of care they should be receiving.”

Oncology consultant

### Healthcare utilisation:

Of 19 deaths within CESC, there was:

- an **80% reduction in length of stay in the last year of life** compared to baseline (12.7 days to 2.5 days)
- a **12% reduction in non-elective admissions** (1.4 to 1.3)
- and a **61% reduction in ED attendances** (1.43 to 0.7).

### Conclusions and implications for practice:

- ✓ **Onco-geriatricians play a vital role in the multidisciplinary care of patients with incurable cancer**, alongside disease-targeted treatment. This is increasingly relevant with an aging population receiving cancer care.
- ✓ **Although early evidence suggestive of reduction in healthcare utilisation**, more work is needed to quantify the impact on QoL and any associated cost savings through deprescribing and admission avoidance.