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**Policy name:** Referral to Hospice in the Weald

**Policy number:** 1.01

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### **1. Policy statement**

Hospice in the Weald aims to provide high quality, hospice palliative care and end of life care to individuals diagnosed with a terminal illness, including the care and support of their carers and families. This policy sets out the referral process to access services.

### **2. Related policies, guidelines and procedures**

Policies: Admissions to the In-Patient Ward (1.02)  
Out of Hours Access to Hospice Care (2.11)  
Adverse Comments and Complaints (6.04)

### **3. Responsibility and accountability**

Policy formulation and review: Helen McGee, Medical Director  
Clinical approval: CEO  
Compliance: All clinical staff

### **4. Relevant dates**

Policy originated: October 2006  
Last Review: November 2016  
This review date: November 2018  
Next review date: November 2022

### **5. Services available at Hospice in the Weald**

All services are multi-professional in their philosophy. All referred patients have access to medical, nursing, counselling, wellbeing therapies, occupational and physiotherapy services, creative musician and artist and chaplaincy input as well as volunteer services.

## **Services available at Hospice in The Weald are as follows:**

- In-patient Ward
- Hospice Day Service
- Hospice in the Home
- Counselling and Support Services
- Cottage Hospice

Patients' family members and carers can access Hospice services while the patient is under our care. Once a patient has died, certain services such as bereavement support and wellbeing therapies will continue to be offered for an agreed time. In addition, bereavement support services are offered as a routine to all family members and carers of Hospice in the Weald patients, even if they have not accessed any other services prior to the patient's death.

Telephone advice is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week for patients, their families and carers as well as healthcare professionals.

## **6. Referral criteria for all services**

Patients are accepted into the service if they have been diagnosed with a terminal illness such as:

- advanced cancer;
- advanced degenerative neurological conditions;
- advanced heart failure (New York Heart Association (NYHA) Class 3 or 4);
- end stage chronic kidney disease (stage 4 or 5);
- end-stage dementia
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease  
(this is not an exhaustive list).

As a guide for referrers we suggest referring patients who are thought to be in the last year of their life but will accept referrals for patients with longer prognoses for whom the complex nature of the illness requires a multi-professional approach to the control of symptoms, psychological, social and spiritual support.

We accept referrals for all appropriate patients who live in our notional catchment area of West Kent and north East Sussex. However, we believe strongly in patient choice and where patients who live outside our notional catchment area, request referral to our services we will endeavor to facilitate this on an individualized basis. If the patient lives too far away for us to carry out Home visits, we will make this clear at referral and, offer them our Hospice based services such as Hospice Appointments, telephone support, Hospice Day Services and C&SS support. We will liaise with their GP about this and confirm this in a letter to the patient (see Appendix 2).

## **7. Making a referral to Hospice in the Weald**

**Referral must always be made with the patient's agreement.**

Referrals can be made by:

- The patient or family member
- The patient's GP
- A member of the primary health care team / professions allied to medicine (PAMs)
- The patient's hospital consultant and / or member of the ward team
- Hospital and community palliative care teams

- Hospices
- Nursing home staff

In all instances, the GP will be contacted to obtain background medical information and an assessment will be carried out with the patient to ascertain if they are suitable for the Hospice services and how we can best support them.

## **8. The referral process**

Referrals to Hospice in the Weald can be made using the Hospice in the Weald referral form (**Appendix 1**), via telephone or via the Hospice in the Weald website. Medical summaries including current medication should be included with the referral form or contact with the GP will be made to obtain this information.

Urgent referrals are triaged by the Duty CNS. Contact with the referrer may be sought to clarify reasons for referral. The patient's GP or Consultant may also be contacted to confirm diagnosis. Once the referral has been accepted it will be assigned to the appropriate health care professional or service by the triaging nurse.

If the referral is not urgent the Care Records Team will contact the patient or next of kin and arrange an appointment. A Hospice Appointment will be offered, unless the patient is unable to come to the Hospice, then a home visit may be offered. Any queries or concerns will be discussed with the Duty CNS.

If admission is requested for patients not previously known to the hospice, contact with the patient's GP is made to inform them of the referral and to request additional medical information. Contact with the referrer is usually made. The patient will need to be assessed by a hospice CNS or doctor prior to the admission being agreed, unless the referral is made by a hospital palliative care team.

If a referral is made out of office hours, the details will be passed onto the relevant team the following day.

## **9. Inappropriate referrals**

Referrals may not be accepted for patients who do not have hospice palliative care or generic end of life care needs, or who are deemed to not meet any of the referral criteria. The nurse assessing the patient will explain this to the patient and liaise with the referrer to explain why the referral has not been accepted. Documentation of all contacts should be recorded in the patient's electronic care record (ECR) and the status changed appropriately.

## **10. Response standards**

<b>Urgent referrals:</b>	Contact will be made by a member of the Hospice in the Home team with the patient within 24 hours of receipt of the referral. to arrange an appointment or give appropriate advice.
<b>Routine referrals:</b>	Contact will be made by the appropriate Hospice professional within 5 working days to arrange an appointment.

**For patients referred while in hospital, these standards apply from the day of discharge.**

## **11. Shared Care**

At Hospice in the Weald, we share the care of patients both internally and externally, with other health and social care professionals to ensure we are using an integrated approach to providing high-quality 24-hour care to patients referred to our services, including their families and carers.

## **12. Request for Hospice In Patient or Cottage Hospice admission**

Refer to the Admission Policy (1.02) for all In Patient Ward or Cottage Hospice admission requests.

## **13. Adverse Comments/Complaints about Referral Process**

Feedback regarding the referral process to all services is welcomed and should be addressed to: -

Care Director  
Hospice in the Weald  
Maidstone Road  
Pembury  
Tunbridge Wells  
TN2 4TA  
Telephone: 01892 820500  
e-mail: [michelle.ford@hospiceintheweald.org.uk](mailto:michelle.ford@hospiceintheweald.org.uk)

A copy of Hospice in the Weald's Adverse Comment and Complaint Policy (2.4) is readily available on our website

[https://www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk/uploads/forms/6.4\\_Adverse\\_Comments\\_and\\_Complaints\\_Jan\\_2015\\_B.pdf](https://www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk/uploads/forms/6.4_Adverse_Comments_and_Complaints_Jan_2015_B.pdf)

or from the above contact.



# Referral Form

Email: [hitw.hospice@nhs.net](mailto:hitw.hospice@nhs.net) or call 01892 820515

We will endeavor to contact the patient within 2 working days of this referral being received.

Please let us know if the patient is aware of this referral?

Title  First Name  Surname

NHS Number  DOB

Address inc. postcode

Telephone No.  Mobile

Gender  Ethnicity  Marital Status

Current place of care

Estimated Prognosis

Primary Diagnosis

Reason for Referral

GP, name, address and contact no.

Family members - name, address, contact no and relationship

Person completing this form, name, job title, contact no

## Appendix 2



Maidstone Road,  
Pembury,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent TN2 4TA

Tel: 01892 820500

[www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk](http://www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk)  
[louise.buck@hospiceintheweald.org.uk](mailto:louise.buck@hospiceintheweald.org.uk)

[Date]

Dear (Patient name)

Thank you for contacting Hospice in the Weald with regard to your palliative care and support.

Unfortunately, you and/or your GP (*delete as appropriate*) are based outside of our notional catchment area and whilst we would be happy to support you, due to the distance involved we can only offer you a limited range of our services.

We would recommend therefore that you may wish to consider contacting a Hospice nearer to your home, that is supported by your GP and the community palliative care support services within your area. This will enable you to have more timely and appropriate home support as and when it is required.

If you would still like to pursue support from Hospice in the Weald, we would be able to offer you this via telephone consultations, access to our Hospice Day Service in Pembury and if you needed it, an in-patient stay in Pembury or our Cottage Hospice in Five Ashes. We would not be able to provide a home visiting service, due to the traveling distances involved for our staff who currently cover a large area spanning West Kent and East Sussex.

We sincerely hope that we can assist you to find the most supportive and appropriate care to suit your needs and will be happy to answer any questions you have on the telephone number/email address above.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Louise Buck  
Head of Hospice in the Home