



## FACT SHEET

# The Multidisciplinary Team approach to Treating Brain Tumours

### The Treatment Team

Management of a patient with a brain tumour needs to be very specialised because a brain tumour can have a wide range of effects on a patient's life and functioning. It may affect one's appearance, the ability to talk or remember words, think clearly, vision, hearing, smell or taste, mobility or balance. For the best possible treatment and care, it is important to consult with a team of specialists in brain tumours who can help you manage any changes you might experience.

A **Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)** is a group of health professionals who meet to discuss all relevant treatment options and develop an individual treatment plan for each patient. This collaborative approach allows the team to make decisions about the most appropriate treatment and supportive care for the patient while taking into account each patient's preferences and circumstances. In Sydney South West Area Health Service – Western Zone, this MDT meets twice a month to confidentially discuss the care of patients with brain tumours.

### Members of the team

Key members of the team that will be involved in your care, if needed, include:-

Neurosurgeon - evaluates, biopsies, removes, or partially removes tumours by performing surgery to your brain. The neurosurgeon collects tumour tissue, which is sent to the laboratory to aid in diagnosing exactly what type of tumour you have.

Radiation Oncologist - prescribes and co-ordinates the course of radiotherapy

Medical Oncologist – prescribes and co-ordinates the course of chemotherapy

Neuro-radiologist –interprets X-rays such as brain CT and MRI scans

Neuro-pathologist - interprets tumour tissue after brain tumour surgery

Nurses – to assist and support you through all stages of your treatment

Social Worker – to help you deal with the emotional and practical concerns of having a brain tumour and advise on support services



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Speech Pathologist - to help you improve your ability to talk and swallow

Dietitian – recommends an eating plan to follow while you are having treatment and recovering.

Physiotherapist – ensures that muscles continue to function properly and stay strong

Occupational therapist – to help people develop and maintain their skills to carry out their everyday tasks or "occupations". These may include self care (bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting, feeding), household and community (cooking, cleaning, shopping), work/school, and leisure/recreational activities

General Practitioner (GP) / Family Doctor- provides whole-patient medical care and makes appropriate referrals to other doctors, health care professionals and community services.

Rehabilitation Physician - treats illness non-surgically to decrease pain and restore function to patients.

Neurologist - diagnoses and treats nervous system disorders, including diseases of the brain, spinal cord, nerves and muscles. This includes problems with seizures, movement, balance, ambulation, reflexes, sensation, memory, speech, language, and other cognitive abilities.

Clinical Psychologist and Neuropsychologist - specialises in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of cognitive, emotional and behavioural problems.

Endocrinologist – diagnoses and treats disorders of the endocrine system, which deals with diabetes, thyroid diseases, osteoporosis, metabolic disorders, and various other conditions, including side-effects related to taking corticosteroid medications.

Diabetes Nurse Educator - teaches, counsels, and coordinates care for people with diabetes, or from side-effects related to taking corticosteroid medications.



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Palliative care team- aims to improve the quality of life of people with cancer and their families by preventing and relieving symptoms of the cancer or your treatment, and help you with the practical problems of daily life. Palliative care also involves spiritual and emotional care, and the support of family and other carers

Generalist Community Nursing team – assists with general health and home assessment including individual health education , information about health and community services , referral to other services including Home Care and Meals on Wheels, and assessment and help with health care equipment

#### Support Groups

Support groups can reduce the feeling that you are going through cancer alone. These groups provide reassurance, suggestions, insight -a safe haven where you can share similar concerns with your peers in a supportive environment. In the Sydney South West Area Health Service – Western Zone, patients diagnosed with a brain tumour and their families are very welcome to attend and take part in a support group at Liverpool Hospital. For further information on the Brain Tumour Support Group please contact:-

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#### Additional Resources

Cancer Council Helpline  
131120

[www.cancercouncil.com.au](http://www.cancercouncil.com.au)

Brain Tumour Australia  
[www.bta.org.au](http://www.bta.org.au)