South West London

Last Updated Thursday, 23 January 2014

South West London Cancer Research Network

Annual Progress Report 2012/13

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Trusts in the Network

- ST GEORGE'S HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST

- EPSOM & ST HELIER NHS TRUST
- KINGSTON HOSPITAL NHS TRUST
- CROYDON HEALTH SERVICES (FORMERLY MAYDAY) NHS TRUST
- THE ROYAL MARSDEN HOSPITAL NHS TRUST
- SOUTH WEST LONDON COMMUNITY NHS TRUST

Geographical coverage and population

The population served by the South West London Cancer Research Network (SWLCRN) is approximately 1.75 million and is defined as the residents of the Health Authorities of Croydon, Kingston and Richmond, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth, together with the populations of parts of East Surrey and Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster. The Thames Cancer Registry has estimated that 5466 new cancer cases registered in 1998.

Structure and Activity

The SWLCRN currently integrates research development activity with other NHS activities by collaborations in clinical trials sponsored/funded by the Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, Leukaemia Research Fund, the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer and the Pharmaceutical Industry. There are currently over 500 research projects underway within the Network including clinical trials, screening and prevention studies and quality of life research.

All research activity undertaken within the Royal Marsden NHS Trust, Epsom & St Helier NHS Trust and St George’s Healthcare NHS Trust comply with the principles of Clinical Research Governance, with the focus on the patients. Protocols involving patients are carried out in accordance with the International Committee on Harmonisation Guidelines on Good Clinical Practice (ICH GCP) or the Medical Research Council Guidelines on Good Clinical Practice in Clinical Trials. In addition, local research ethics approval has been obtained prior to the recruitment of patients into research projects.

There are approximately 58 research nurses currently employed within the SWLCRN working solely in cancer research. The majority of these research nurses co-ordinate pharmaceutical trials. A large proportion of the nurses’ time is spent identifying potentially eligible patients, providing information about a specific study and answering questions patients may have in order for them to make an informed decision on whether or not to enter a clinical trial or study. There are numerous data managers working within the individual Trusts ensuring that study data is completed and submitted to the relevant clinical trials offices for analysis.

Future Plans

The aim of the SWLCRN is to: Increase patient recruitment into NCRN approved clinical trials and ensure that the accrual rate is 10% or more of new cancer cases within the Network. Improve communication between all relevant healthcare personnel to ensure effective co-ordination of clinical research Identify barriers to recruitment and develop strategies to help overcome these issues. To increase and expand the Network Clinical Trials Portfolio and ensure all patients within the Network have the opportunity to participate in a clinical trials

In order to increase patient recruitment and ensure that all patients within the Network have a chance to enter into a clinical trials, 7 research nurses and 1 data manager will be employed and based within specific hospitals within the Network including the District General Hospitals. The research nurses will be recruiting patients into clinical trials approved by the National Cancer Research Network and the aim is to ensure that 10% of all new cancer cases are entered into clinical trials as outlined in the NHS Cancer Plan. The SWLCRN support team will be fully integrated within the oncology departments of the Trusts and will be expected to attend all in-house training days, in addition to research specific training courses which staff will undertake where relevant. The majority of the annual budget will be spent on staff however, a sum of money has been set aside for service support costs to cover the increased workload and financial burden this will bring about to departments such as pharmacy, pathology and radiology.

All NCRN trials currently undertaken within the South West London Cancer Research Network will be supported, in particular trials in which there is potential for a significant increase in patient recruitment. The Tumour Working Groups within the Network are currently establishing agreed clinical trials portfolios for the different tumour types. The Network Co-ordinator will circulate information on all new NCRN approved trials so that Clinicians may consider including the trials in the specific clinical trials portfolio. Currently the Tumour Working Groups meet quarterly and the Network Co-ordinator has attended meetings in order to ensure all personnel involved in cancer clinical research are aware of the SWLCRN and the aims of the NCRN. Communication within the Network has improved through meetings and talks given to healthcare professionals within the Network in addition to the circulation of a quarterly newsletter for staff and patients.

Local Links Breakthrough Breast Cancer Charity Cancer Support UK
Provides information about cancer, support networks and services nationwide Institute of Cancer Research The Royal Marsden NHS Trust Cancer Resource Centre
Provides information, support and complementary therapy services to people with cancer as well as family and friends South East Cancer Help Centre
Offers information on complementary health services/counselling and group support
The Coordinating Centre is a consortium of the University of Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, and the Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit. It is funded by the National Institute for Health Research with additional support from and collaboration with the National Cancer Research Institute and Cancer Research UK.