

# Supportive and Palliative Care in Heart Failure

The Heart Failure Service comprises of cardiac nurses and cardiologists working out of Torbay Hospital. We see patients with a diagnosis of heart failure in a variety of settings, including the hospital, clinics, and their homes. The team meet weekly to discuss and make plans for patients to ensure they get the right treatment at the right time.

## What happens when your condition changes?

For some people their heart failure symptoms become worse and treatments are no longer helping as much as they were. Being told this may be a shock and frightening but talking to family and those looking after you can be really supportive. There may come a time when supportive and palliative care is needed.

## What is supportive and palliative Care?

Supportive care helps you and your family to cope with your condition and treatment of it –

from diagnosis, during treatment and management, continuing illness or death and into bereavement. It helps the patient to receive the best treatment available and to live as well as possible with the effects of the disease. It is given equal priority alongside diagnosis and treatment.



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## What is supportive and palliative care? Continued

Palliative care is part of supportive care and is the active holistic care of patients with advanced progressive illness. Managing pain and other symptoms and providing psychological, social and spiritual support is our highest priority. The aim of palliative care is to achieve the best quality of life for patients and their families. Many aspects of palliative care are also important earlier in the course of the illness alongside other treatments.

Rowcroft Hospice and the Torbay and South Devon Foundation Trust Hospital Palliative Care Team provide palliative care in South Devon.

## Who are the supportive and palliative care in heart failure multi-disciplinary team?

- Cardiologists (doctors) specialising in heart failure
- Heart Failure Nurse Specialists
- Hospital Palliative Care Nurse Specialists and doctors
- Rowcroft Hospice Community Nurse Specialists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Social Workers, Doctors, Complementary Therapists, Music Therapists and the Listening and Support Team.
- Community Matrons

The team meet twice a month to discuss patients whose care needs are changing and may benefit from more support.



## Frequently asked questions and myth busters

### What happens in the multi-disciplinary team meeting?

The team of health professionals looking after you will review your treatment, care and family support needs in partnership with your GP.

They will identify if support from the Palliative Care Team would help you and, with your permission, will ask them to contact you.

### How will this help me?

Any physical or emotional symptoms and care needs you have may be improved by this co-ordinated approach.

At this time in your life it is also important that you have a say and some control over your care.

Planning for the future is one aspect which you may wish to discuss with the Palliative Care team or your GP.

### Fact:

Many people receive palliative care for a number of months or years. It is based on individual needs so services offered may vary.



## **Additional local and national support**

### **British Heart Foundation**

*An everyday guide to living with Heart Failure.* Pages: 80–86

[www.bhf.org.uk/publications/heart-conditions/an-everyday-guide-to-living-with-heart-failure](http://www.bhf.org.uk/publications/heart-conditions/an-everyday-guide-to-living-with-heart-failure)

*Heart failure and how it changed my life.* Pages: 57–60

[www.bhf.org.uk/publications/heart-conditions/living-with-heart-failure](http://www.bhf.org.uk/publications/heart-conditions/living-with-heart-failure)

### **Carer support**

[www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/25417.pdf](http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/25417.pdf)

### **Wellbeing Today**

[www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/25419.pdf](http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/uploads/25419.pdf)

## **Videos on heart failure**

[www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/cardiology-cardiac-centre/support-videos/managing-heart-failure/](http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/cardiology-cardiac-centre/support-videos/managing-heart-failure/)

### **Rowcroft Hospice**

[www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/how-we-can-help/hospice-care-south-devon/care-resources/](http://www.rowcrofthospice.org.uk/how-we-can-help/hospice-care-south-devon/care-resources/)

### **Devon Doctors**

Out of hours treatment for patients with palliative care needs leaflet

[www.devondoctors.co.uk/end-of-life](http://www.devondoctors.co.uk/end-of-life)

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