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Aughton Surgery



MACMILLAN  
CANCER SUPPORT

**“It's relaxed and informal...Give it a go. Talking to others who are going through similar journeys can be really helpful - and it's fun!”**

## Our Challenge

Aughton General Practice is in semi-rural Lancashire and supports 6,000 people. People with cancer are referred to the Macmillan Cancer Care Centre ten miles away, and travel means many struggle to engage with its services. When COVID-19 hit, people with cancer had to shield. This exacerbated feelings of isolation; magnified fear and anxiety. Maggi Bradley, Aughton's General Practice Nurse (GPN) and Craig Williams (facilitator), worked with Macmillan to run Video Group Clinics (VGCs) to improve access and holistic care reviews for people with cancer

## Our Group Clinic Design

The team undertook an Emis search to generate a patient list, including newly diagnosed people; those mid-way through and those who had completed treatment. Maggi asked if, alongside peers in a similar situation, they would like to participate in a video group cancer care review, and emphasised the benefits of peer-to-peer support and learning. Working alongside Craig, she and a Macmillan Support Manager planned to run monthly VGCs with up to 8 patients. 'Move More' physiotherapists also joined. After the first few VGCs, the team introduced a pre-clinic questionnaire hosted on Survey Monkey to help with completion of the cancer care review discussion board. Newly diagnosed patients join routinely from diagnosis, and the plan is to expand this VGC PCN wide

### Discussion Board

Cancer Care Review (completed via SurveyMonkey)

Signposting Macmillan services

## What Changed & Improved? Efficiency and Access

- Prior to VGCs, the GPN spent 30 minutes 1:1 with every person. Now Maggi reviews and supports 6-8 people in a 75 minutes; an efficiency gain of 80%.
- Participants access 'Move More' physiotherapists in VGC; an added access bonus
- People are able to access support without the inconvenience of travel. One person joined whilst they were having chemotherapy; another during his lunch hour from his van!
- People are more aware of the broad nature of Macmillan services and can tap into them

## Clinical Impact

- People learn from peers as well as GPN and Macmillan support manager, which informs and supports their cancer journey
- Easier access to 'Move More' teams supports people to maintain an active lifestyle, despite cancer treatment

## Psycho Social Impact

- Meeting others at different stages helped people come to terms with cancer e.g. one participant who had recovered supported a peer going through chemotherapy. for the same tumour.
- VGCs are about living with cancer. People get practical advice e.g. where to park and the cost, which eases anxiety
- There is a sense of belonging. Isolation reduces; participants make friends and build informal support networks. Self-worth grows; anxieties are addressed before they escalate into debilitating fears

## Experience of Care

- There are smiles, laughs and fun People were able and willing to use technology regardless of age, gender, socio-economic status
- The GPN and facilitator found delivering cancer VGCs joyful. They said getting to know patients and seeing how much they got from VGC was very satisfying, and VGC is a great way of bringing people together in these bizarre times
- Maggi has developed as a GPN leader and recently won a TOPOL Fellowship to expand her VGC work

**“If any VGC is worth doing, it's this is one. It has been the highlight of my career” GPN**