

Improving Psychological Support for People Affected by Cancer in Scotland



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Why is improving psychological support important?

- Ambition 9 of the Scottish Government Cancer Action Plan (2023-2033): “Mental Health As Part Of Basic Care”
- Approx. 33% of people living with cancer experience mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression (Mehnert et al, 2014)



The Scottish Government published the Psychological Therapies and Support Framework for People Affected by Cancer (PTSF) in 2022 which details the following principles:



Psychosocial support is everybody's business and should be integrated into cancer pathways from prehab to rehab, or end of life care



Provision of essential training and support to ensure staff feel confident and competent in psychosocial support



Whole system approach across health, social care and third sector



Clear pathways, including screening, identifying level of need and access to specialist services

- The Macmillan Psychological Support Project is an 18-month project which aims to support the implementation of the PTSF by undertaking benchmarking of current service provision and scoping of opportunities to increase psychological support.
- The project will provide key recommendations for Macmillan, Scottish Government and Health Boards of how to develop services, including identifying training requirements.

How you can support this work:

- Engage with your Regional Psychological Therapy and Support Steering Group – contact the project team for details of your Regional group
- Support the PTSF self assessment process
- Recognise and talk about psychological distress – “the 6th vital sign”

