

Enhanced supportive care (ESC) is a scheme designed to make sure that you have better access to symptom control and rehabilitation at an early stage.

What is ESC?

Enhanced supportive care helps people to stay well during cancer treatment and after it has finished, particularly when the aim is not to cure the disease. ESC focuses on managing symptoms caused by cancer or its treatment and allows patients to make choices appropriate for them, both now and in the future. ESC is available in this Trust.

ESC: A positive approach

ESC provides a positive individualised approach for patients living with cancer. Our focus is on achieving your goals and keeping you well before, during and after your treatment has ended. ESC is delivered by doctors and nurses as well as other healthcare professionals who are specifically trained to manage the problems caused by cancer or its treatments. We will work alongside your oncologist to provide the best possible treatment for you and your family. If it would help, the team can also talk to you about how you are coping and what is important to you when deciding on further treatments and your goals and plans for the future.

Where did ESC come from?

Enhanced supportive care was developed by specialists at the Christie NHS Foundation Trust in Manchester and has been found to help patients. It is now a national project.

Does ESC really work?

Research shows that early access to supportive care can help patients to feel better during their cancer treatment. ESC has also been shown to prevent problems from escalating and helps to keep people at home rather than in hospital.

Who can I speak to about ESC?

You can ask any of the doctors and nurses looking after you or contact the Cancer Rehabilitation team on **0118 322 6940** or **07392 861323** or email **cancer.rehabilitation@nhs.net**.



Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Berkshire Cancer Centre, Oct 2025
Review due: Oct 2027



Enhanced Supportive Care (ESC) at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

Information for patients

“Supportive care makes excellent cancer treatment possible.”

*Multinational Association of
Supportive Care in Cancer*

When should ESC start?

ESC is available to you at any stage and usually starts shortly after starting your latest cancer treatment. It is offered to patients where the end-point of treatment is not curative, even though the patient might have a long prognosis.



Will ESC affect treatments for my cancer?

No. Supportive care works alongside chemotherapy and radiotherapy so will not affect or interfere with your cancer treatment; in fact, it should complement it.

How can ESC help me?

ESC can:

- Help with problems caused by your cancer or its treatment.
- Help to improve or resolve troublesome symptoms.
- Provide practical advice and support.
- Provide access to cancer rehabilitation, which may include dietary advice, physical activity specialists and counselling.
- ESC can also help with financial questions and further holistic support for you and your family.

ESC will:

- Work with your oncology team, GP and palliative care team (if appropriate).
- Offer help to you and your family at an early stage.
- Help you to plan your future care.



Who provides ESC?

Supportive care can be provided by various clinicians and allied health care professionals, including dietitians, pain management experts, palliative care specialists, psychologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

Specialist nurses from the Cancer Rehabilitation team run a weekly ESC clinic together with the Trust's palliative care team. During the appointment, they will speak with you about what is important to you and your family and make suggestions to help support you in managing the physical, emotional, psychological and practical aspects of cancer.

The 6 principles of ESC

1. Much earlier involvement of supportive care services in cancer care.
2. Teams that support cancer patients working more closely together.
3. A positive approach to supportive care.
4. Cutting edge and evidence-based practice in supportive and palliative care.
5. Technology to improve our communication and way of working.
6. Best practice in care of patients undergoing chemotherapy.

NHS England