

Focus on  
cancer  
services

# Healthcheck

Issue 10 • Oncology Media Bulletin

## Laying the foundations for the future of cancer services



Greetings from  
**Paul Wood**  
Strategy Director at  
The London Clinic

I AM SURE YOU WILL AGREE, the past few months have been a fast moving but exciting time in the development of our wonderful new Cancer Centre.

For all those involved in its planning, design and construction, we are now at last seeing the vision of five years ago becoming a reality. As the scaffolding and hoarding comes down, what is being revealed, almost "brick by brick", is a building of true presence and stature in the heart of London's 'Harley Street community'. It looks set to become a landmark structure of quality and distinction, providing hope and inspiration for all who will pass through its doors from December onwards.

You are invited to take a 'sneak preview' and experience the virtual tour of the centre, thanks to our innovative new 'flythrough' DVD (please find attached).

In this issue of Healthcheck we'll also be meeting some of the people who, together with other nursing colleagues and clinical experts, will continue to form the backbone of our future cancer service. Our huge thanks and appreciation go out to all.

...and finally, as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month (October), we shall be focusing on the Clinic's comprehensive approach to diagnosing and treating this all too common disease that still affects so many women (page 2).

I hope you will find this Healthcheck of interest.

the London clinic   
inspired care



If your DVD of The London Clinic Cancer Centre virtual tour is not affixed here please call: **020 8786 3860**

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**YOUR CANCER CENTRE DVD**

# Supporting you every step of the way on the **breast cancer** journey



The enormity of breast cancer for patients goes well beyond the initial diagnosis, affecting people at different times, in different ways.

The London Clinic Breast Centre offers patients the full spectrum of clinical and support services from advanced imaging to the latest biopsy techniques and treatments.

Our philosophy - to support patients at every step through their breast cancer 'journey' - means that each patient has access to a breast care nurse from diagnosis, through to treatment and beyond.

It is often not until treatment is completed that a patient – and their family – starts to come to terms with the diagnosis. At The London Clinic, a post-treatment follow up plan means that the team is always there to support patients to enable them to return to their everyday lives.

Sandy Miller, Breast Care Clinical Nurse Specialist says;

that each patient can be offered the best treatment available.

Using a combination of treatment options given by experts within their sub-speciality fields has contributed to the steadily improving outcomes in women with breast cancer”.

**Patients at The London Clinic Breast Centre also benefit from a range of specialist services including<sup>1</sup>:**

- Breast health and screening
- Digital mammography
- Ultrasound
- MRI scanning
- Fine needle aspiration
- Core biopsy
- Suros vacuum-assisted biopsy
- Sentinel lymph node biopsy
- Nuclear medicine
- Specialist cytology
- Breast reconstruction
- And more...

**Nurse and counselling support**

- Breast Care Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Counselling service
- Oncology counsellor
- Macmillan cancer information centre
- Macmillan Cancer Information Nurse
- Prosthesis and specialist bra fitting service
- Complementary therapies including acupuncture and reflexology



## **Continuity of Care**

Jenny Park, our Breast Care Clinical Nurse Specialist, plays a key role in each patient's 'journey', providing information, care and support throughout treatment. Jenny and her colleagues in the nursing team work closely with leading medical oncologists, consultants and surgeons to provide each patient with a personalised programme of care.

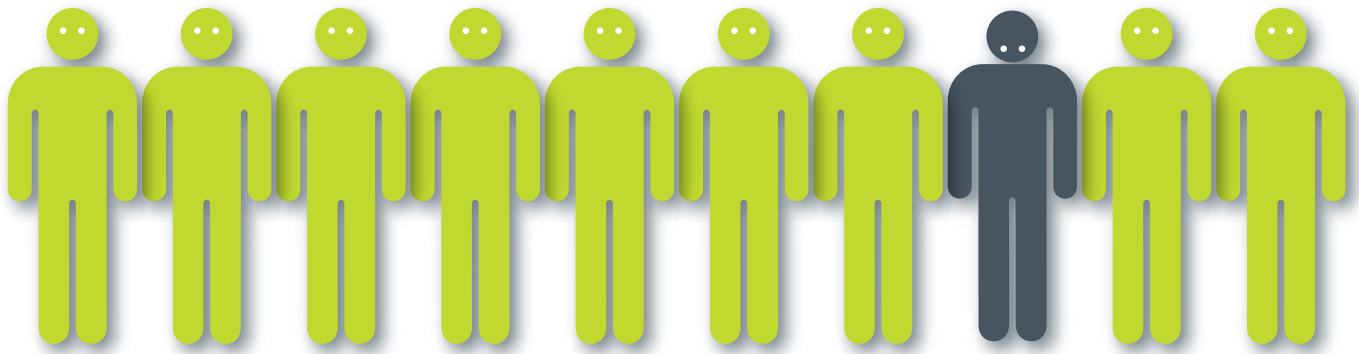
Jenny comments: “Here at The London Clinic our aim is to provide a range of services in order to deliver a comprehensive package of care, and to support the individual through often complex treatment-related issues and their potential side-effects.”

“Throughout their treatment path, we see patients regularly – often building strong relationships with them and their family. The doors of communication are always open and patients are welcome to contact the team at any time.”

Mr Tim Davidson, Consultant Breast Surgeon at The London Clinic, chairs its regular breast cancer multidisciplinary meeting in keeping with national quality standards for breast care. Mr Davidson explains; “Decisions about multimodality treatment for breast cancer are discussed by a team including breast surgeons, pathologists, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists. This process ensures

**Breast cancer affects an estimated 1 in 9 women in their lifetime\* and with more than 1,000 women dying in the UK per month\*, breast awareness is more important than ever. October is national Breast Cancer Awareness Month and the team at **The London Clinic** is proud to support the campaign.**

# Sex education for cancer patients



When diagnosed with cancer, relationships with your spouse or partner can inevitably take a back seat. You suddenly become focused on one common goal – seeking the best advice and treatment and conserving your mental and physical energy to help you tackle your condition.

**Around 1 in 10 men suffer from Erectile Dysfunction and there may be a number of different causes\*.**

It's all consuming and when treatment is over – whether surgery or a gruelling drugs regimen – many patients need to take time to rest and recuperate. Resuming a sexual relationship or maintaining some form of sexual intimacy throughout is probably the furthest thing from their mind.

And for many, particularly men, treatment for certain types of cancer (such as prostate or bowel) may leave them suffering from erectile dysfunction (ED) or impotence (the inability to develop or maintain an erection sufficient for satisfactory sexual activity). This can be embarrassing and a difficult condition to accept – leading to further anxiety at an already difficult time.

Lorraine Grover, a therapist in sexual wellbeing, runs weekly

sessions at The London Clinic and an important part of her role is to help advise and support patients who are experiencing ED following their treatment for cancer.

Lorraine tells Healthcheck: "Erectile dysfunction remains one of the great taboos and it is sad – and unnecessary – that so many men simply suffer in silence rather than asking for help. With the recent development of new drugs and specialist treatment, this problem can be managed successfully and there is no reason why many men that I see shouldn't be able to overcome this common problem."

Around 1 in 10 men suffer from ED and there may be a number of different causes\*. There can be several factors that cause this 'mechanism' to fail, but Lorraine

understands that when treating men pre or post-surgery or post-chemotherapy there are several ways of addressing the problem, that may include drug therapy or medically designed aids including implants and vacuum devices.

Lorraine adds: "What can often seem to be yet another setback, especially for those who have endured months of cancer treatment, can be resolved relatively quickly. Patients and/or their partners just need to have the courage to self-refer or alternatively seek advice from their GP or consultant, who should be able to put them in touch with a qualified sex therapist".

"And, despite the range of effective treatments that are now available to cancer patients, they shouldn't under-estimate the

benefits of talking. Many patients and their partners feel nervous about starting to have sex after treatment which can exacerbate the physical issues further, so I'm here to ensure that couples keep communicating and don't become overwhelmed by the prospect of a sex life after cancer."



**Lorraine Grover,**  
Therapist in  
Sexual Wellbeing

Lorraine Grover has recently taken part in an online video for Macmillan Cancer Support called 'Sex and Cancer', see it here:

[www.youtube.com/thelondonclinic](http://www.youtube.com/thelondonclinic)

# Healthcheck

## Bowel cancer: tackling the taboo

As a nation, we are not renowned for recognising and addressing “embarrassing” health complaints – particularly those regarding our bottoms and ‘toilet habits’.

However, in some cases, a reluctance to seek advice about changes to our bowel movements (such as prolonged constipation or frequent, loose stools, abdominal pain, extreme fatigue or bleeding from the bottom) can mean the difference between life and death. The message is clear – early diagnosis saves lives and if caught, bowel cancer (which is now the most common form of the disease with 35,000 new cases every year) can be successfully treated. In fact, over half of those diagnosed will be cured, sometimes without the need for surgery.

Chris McAndrew, Colorectal Nurse Practitioner at The London Clinic, tells Healthcheck: “Anyone with a family history of bowel cancer should be regularly monitored by a colorectal specialist or geneticist. But, because we know that early detection saves lives, we would recommend that anyone over the age of 50 is aware of and offered appropriate bowel cancer screening”.

The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme was launched in 2006 and so far is only open to people aged 60 - 69. By comparison, in the USA, bowel cancer screening by colonoscopy has been established since 2000 with the recommendation that average-risk individuals are screened every 10 years from age 50. Incidence rates of bowel cancer in certain patient groups are now falling in the USA suggesting that screening is having an overall positive impact.

There are a number of screening options available at The London Clinic, from the simple, non invasive Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT), to colonoscopy examinations and new, specialised CT (X-ray) technology.

As part of our ongoing commitment to raising awareness of this disease and highlighting the importance of screening, The London Clinic will be

joining forces with leading charity, Beating Bowel Cancer – an organisation dedicated to promoting early diagnosis and encouraging open access to treatment choice for those affected by bowel cancer. We will be supporting its annual awareness campaign, BE LOUD in January 2010, in addition to other educational projects (see: [beatingbowelcancer.org](http://beatingbowelcancer.org) for more details and information about the disease: signs, symptoms and treatment).



Chris adds: “The colorectal service at The London Clinic offers a comprehensive range of investigations and diagnostic procedures in an area led by gastroenterologists, endoscopists and colorectal surgeons. They are in turn they are in turn supported by multi-disciplinary and nursing teams experienced in the care and management of patients, ensuring they are supported every step of the way”.

A dedicated patient telephone helpline, manned by a specialist endoscopy nurse has now been launched at The London Clinic and will remain an important part of the bowel cancer screening service at the new Cancer Centre.

## Lift off!

THE CONSTRUCTION WORK AT THE LONDON CLINIC'S NEW CANCER CENTRE has just reached new heights as cutting edge medical equipment was lifted into place at the start of September.

More than 38 tonnes of sophisticated cancer technology was transferred into the new eight-storey centre (developed by Shepherd Construction) via a huge hoist.

In the lift (pictured) was radiosurgical equipment including: the CyberKnife® Robotic Radiosurgery System and Trilogy® System with RapidArc™. The London Clinic has spent approximately £6 million on new major items of radiosurgery, radiotherapy and imaging equipment – and is the first independent hospital in the UK to invest in both of these most up to date, new technologies for cancer patients.



The CyberKnife® Robotic Radiosurgery System destroys tumours with high-dose beams of radiation and is able to treat any part of the body with pinpoint precision. Trilogy® System with RapidArc™ delivers radiation directly into tumours (lessening the risk of attacking the surrounding healthy tissue) at a greater speed than other conventional radiotherapy treatments.

Paul Wood, Strategy Director at The London Clinic says: “It was a really momentous day, watching this highly sophisticated equipment being carefully delivered to its new home! Its arrival marks an important milestone in the Cancer Centre project, a symbolic occasion that signals the transformation of our building from mere ‘bricks and mortar’ towards a state of the art working hospital and centre of excellence.” Our purpose built Cancer Centre is due for completion in December 2009.

### The London Clinic – welcome to the world of innovation and inspired care

- One of the UK's leading independent hospitals
- Located on Harley Street in the heart of London's medical community
- Long-standing international reputation attracting leading consultants
- Highly complex procedures in addition to routine surgery and medicine
- 24 hour consultant-led Intensive Care Unit

Healthcheck is compiled by The London Clinic Press Office team.

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