The Multidisciplinary

TeamA red line under the title of this fact sheet.

To ensure that you receive the best possible care, a multidisciplinary team (MDT) will work together to create your individually tailored treatment plan. The MDT consists of a variety of specialists. This factsheet contains an outline of the roles of some of the professionals who may be part of your MDT. It is important that you know who is supporting you so that you can have the best understanding of your MDT.

# In this fact sheet:

* An overview of the health professionals who would typically work with you as a brain tumour patient and a brief summary of what they do.
* An outline of some additional health professionals who may work with you following your diagnosis.

## General Practitioner (GP)

Although not technically part of the MDT, your GP (or family doctor) may be the first person you seek medical advice from when you experience symptoms of any kind. If your GP suspects you may have a brain tumour, they will refer you for a brain scan ([*see Scans fact sheet*](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/support-information/Information-new/adult-brain-tumours/newly-diagnosed/Scans.htm)) and for a consultation with a more specialist health professional. If your GP does not think you have a brain tumour, but you are concerned that you might have, please raise this with them. You are also entitled to seek a second professional opinion from another doctor if you wish. Your GP will be able to help you with this.

## Neurologist

A [neurologist](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_N) specialises in problems relating to the brain, spinal cord   
and nerves in the body. You may be referred to a neurologist for your   
initial diagnosis.

## Neuropathologist

A neuropathologist diagnoses diseases of the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord) by looking at a sample of brain tissue (‘biopsy’) under a microscope. From carrying out this examination, the neuropathologist is able to give a diagnosis of the type and [grade](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_G) of the brain tumour.

## Neurosurgeon

If your tumour can be operated on, you will be referred to a [neurosurgeon](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_N). The neurosurgeon will carry out a [biopsy](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_B) (removal of a small piece of the tumour) so that the tumour can be analysed and diagnosed. They may be able to fully or partially remove the tumour and a biopsy will also be taken at this time. You can expect to see your neurosurgeon before and after surgery and for follow-ups in outpatient clinics.

## Neuro-oncologist

[Neuro-oncologists](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_N) specialise in the non-surgical management of patients with tumours of the brain and spinal cord. Your neuro-oncologist will work closely with your neurosurgeon and will co-ordinate any further treatment you may need, including [radiotherapy](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_R) and [chemotherapy.](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/NR/exeres/05EFEFD0-1D42-4972-BF9A-3F7FB7C3012F,frameless.htm?NRMODE=Published#MainControl_Glossary_ZoneMain_GlossaryPlaceholderControl1_ctl00_PresentationModeControlsContainer_SECTION_C)

## Clinical nurse specialist (CNS)

A clinical nurse specialist (sometimes called a neuro-oncology nurse) acts as a point of contact between you, your family and the rest of the MDT.

Your CNS will be able to help with any questions or concerns you may have about your treatment as they can liaise with all members of the MDT on your behalf. They work to ensure good communication between the health professionals within the MDT, as well as between the team and you.

## Radiotherapist

A radiotherapist is a specialist in using radiation to treat cancer. They will plan radiotherapy treatment specifically for your brain tumour type and will monitor your progress throughout the treatment.

## Radiographer

The radiographer is the person who actually administers the radiation treatment. Radiographers work with other professionals who help plan your treatment including radiotherapists and medical physicists.

Whilst you are receiving your radiotherapy you will see radiographers daily.

## Clinical Oncologist

In the UK, a clinical oncologist is a healthcare professional who specialises in both radiotherapy and chemotherapy. They work with other members of the MDT to plan your treatment. In the UK, most neuro-oncologists are also clinical oncologists.

## Additional staff who may work with you after treatment:

### ****Occupational therapist****

Occupational therapists help you to manage daily activities, including dressing, cooking, eating and showering. They may suggest certain aids or equipment around the home to make jobs easier for you, such as a hand rail to help you in and out of the bath.

### ****Physiotherapist****

A physiotherapist helps with the recovery of your physical functioning through physical manipulation of the body and exercises. Patients with brain tumours are often referred to a physiotherapist because of difficulties with balance or muscle weakness caused by the tumour or its treatment. The physiotherapist may put together a programme for you that that includes exercises at home, the gym or in a hydrotherapy pool.

### ****Speech and language therapist****

You may be referred to a speech and language therapist if your tumour affects an area of the brain that is involved with language. Speech and language therapists can also help with difficulties relating to eating and swallowing, which can be an effect caused by the brain tumour.

### ****Dietician****

A dietician specialises in food and nutrition and can help create dietary plans to suit your individual nutritional needs, taking into consideration your   
medical records.

### ****Clinical psychologist****

A clinical psychologist is concerned with reducing psychological distress and promoting psychological well-being. They help with difficulties such as anxiety, depression and relationship issues. They use a range of assessments and tests and can suggest counselling, therapy or advice to help you.

### ****Clinical psychiatrist****

A clinical psychiatrist is a medically qualified doctor who has chosen to specialise in psychiatry. They help with mental disorders and are able to prescribe medication and other treatments.

# What if I have further questions?

If you require further information, any clarification of information, or wish to discuss any concerns, please contact our Support and Information Team.

* Call 0808 800 0004 (free from landlines and most mobiles including 3, O2, Orange, T-mobile, EE, Virgin and Vodafone)
* Email [support@thebraintumourcharity.org](mailto:support@thebraintumourcharity.org)
* Join our online forums at [www.thebraintumourcharity.org/forums](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org/forums)

# About us

The Brain Tumour Charity makes every effort to ensure that we provide accurate, up-to-date and unbiased facts about brain tumours. We hope that these will add to the medical advice you have already been given.

Please do continue to talk to your doctor if you are worried about any medical issues. We are the UK’s leading brain tumour charity. We fund scientific and clinical research into brain tumours and offer information and support to those affected, whilst raising awareness and influencing policy.

We rely 100% on charitable donations to fund our vital work. If you would   
like to make a donation, or want to find out about other ways to support us including fundraising, leaving a gift in your will or giving in memory, please visit us at [www.thebraintumourcharity.org](http://www.thebraintumourcharity.org) or call 01252 749043.

# About this fact sheet

This fact sheet has been written and edited by The Brain Tumour Charity’s Support and Information Team. The accuracy of medical information has been verified by a leading neuro-oncologist. Our fact sheets have been produced with the assistance of patient and carer representatives and up-to-date, reliable sources of evidence. If you would like a list of references for any of the fact sheets, or would like more information about how we produce them, please contact us.

# The Multidisciplinary Team

# Your notes



Hartshead House

61-65 Victoria Road

Farnborough

Hampshire

GU14 7PA

01252 749990

enquiries@thebraintumourcharity.org

<www.thebraintumourcharity.org>

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Version 1 (clear print), first produced in standard print format April 2012. Review date, by April 2014.