

Introduction.

In 2016, the Wales Cancer Research Centre (WCRC) received funding from Health and Care Research Wales to undertake research about cancer and social care - a new area of work that sits within our Community research theme.

As there is currently no single agreed definition of social care⁹, in October 2016, we reviewed and adapted existing social care literature to create a working definition applicable to adult cancer care.

This definition aims to provide a comprehensive description of social care that includes the full range of adult social care services, as well as the support needs of individuals diagnosed with cancer and their carers. It will be used in conjunction with social care research guidelines² to help us identify research opportunities that we believe will result in improved social care and support, and better experiences for people with cancer, and their carers, in Wales.

WCRC's Working Definition of Social Care.

Social care refers to a range of services provided across different settings, usually in the community⁵. Social care services may offer advice, personal care, practical assistance¹, promotion of equality and protection of rights⁴ to adults diagnosed with cancer³, and their carers¹², who require extra support to meet their personal, practical, emotional, economic and social needs^{7,8}. The supportive functions of social care aim to improve quality of life^{6,10} and to enhance wellbeing^{11,12} on an individual, community and societal level.

Guidelines on Social Care Research.

In 2016, Health and Care Research Wales developed social care research guidelines that will further inform our work². We will consider research to be 'social care research' if it broadly focuses on one of the following six areas:

1. Care, Support and Personal Assistance.

The provision of care, support and personal assistance, and/or the associated relationships that play a role in supporting adults with cancer, and their carers, to undertake activities of daily living. This may include:

- Maintenance of independence
- Facilitating opportunities for social interaction and the chance to play a fuller part in society
- Provision of advice
- Assistance managing complex relationships

- Practical help in the home
- Support with equipment and home adaptations
- Provision of visiting and sitting services and/or meals
- Access to services from a care home or other supported accommodation
- Access to facilities for educational, occupational, social, cultural and recreational activities outside the home.

2. Protection and Social Support Services.

The provision of protection for adults diagnosed with cancer, and their carers, who are in need or at risk, or have social needs arising from illness, disability, age or poverty.

3. Prevention and Promotion.

The social needs of adults diagnosed with cancer, and their carers, receiving social care and the services or initiatives addressing those needs including:

- Prevention of deterioration
- Promotion of physical or mental health
- Improving opportunities and life chances
- Strengthening families.

4. Organisations and Systems.

The organisational systems, infrastructures, care settings, and/or personnel involved in the commissioning, provision, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of care and support services; the interface between these components and the impact they have on related systems such as healthcare and housing.

5. Policies.

National and/or local policies that affect the ethos, commissioning, organisation, provision, monitoring, evaluation and delivery of care and support services.

6. Social and Community Cohesion.

The improvement of social and community cohesion (rather than a focus on individuals).

Note.

This is a live document which means that the content may be revised in the future. The most up to date version will always be available on our [website](#)

Contact.

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