



**Irish
Cancer
Society**

action
prostate
cancer

Prostate Cancer Patients' Charter

The care that you deserve



Prostate Cancer Patients' Charter

The Irish Cancer Society is committed to achieving world class cancer services in Ireland. This Charter will help support the continued improvements in the standard of care (based on best evidence) for men with prostate cancer so that information and support is provided at every stage of the prostate cancer journey.

The Charter sets out the standard of service that men with prostate cancer should be entitled to – from the time of diagnosis and treatment through to learning to live with the potential effects of the illness or its treatment. It aims to help men understand the services that they should ask for in order to obtain the best quality care and support.

Using the HSE's document *You and Your Health Service* the Irish Cancer Society has developed this Prostate Cancer Patient Charter to explain what men with prostate cancer should expect from their health services.



1

Access to Services

- You should have information, support and time to decide whether you want to have a prostate biopsy. You should understand the risks and benefits of a prostate biopsy.
- Your diagnosis should happen in a timely manner – within 4 weeks of the decision that prostate biopsy is needed.
- Your diagnosis of prostate cancer should be made as part of a multi-disciplinary team (MDT). This team should include a urologist, a uro-oncology nurse specialist, radiologist, radiation oncologist, uro-pathologist, and a medical oncologist.



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Dignity & Respect

- You have the right to be given a diagnosis of prostate cancer with sensitivity, in a private environment. You should be seen by a urologist, with a uro-oncology nurse specialist present, along with a family member or friend if desired.
- Where the options of surgery and radiotherapy are both suitable you should be able to talk to a urologist and a radiation oncologist about your possible treatments.
- You should clearly understand the effects of any treatments on your quality of life following treatment.
- If you are receiving hormone therapy you should have support and information about this. Your care should be co-ordinated by a specialist nurse, alongside your consultant.
- You should be provided with information on financial entitlements, with assistance from a medical social worker, where appropriate.

3

Safe & Effective Services

- Your care should be managed following international guidelines, from the time of your prostate biopsy, throughout your treatment and during the management of possible side effects.
- You should have a named specialist uro-oncology nurse to act as your 'key-worker.' They should co-ordinate your care throughout all stages of your illness, from diagnosis through to living with the physical and emotional impact of the treatment.
- Specialist physiotherapy support should be provided if you have a radical prostatectomy.
- If you have advanced or recurrent prostate cancer your case should be discussed at MDT and referral to an oncologist considered.

4

Communication & Information

- You should be given clear and unbiased verbal and written information on prostate cancer. This should include the stage of your disease and all possible treatment options. All treatment options should be presented to you even where services are not available in your local hospital.
- You should be fully informed about the effects of prostate cancer treatment on your sexual function, urinary and bowel function, physical appearance and your psychological well-being.
- You should be provided with information on sources of psychological and emotional support such as cancer support centres and support from other men who have been treated for prostate cancer.
- If you have a radical prostatectomy you should be given written and verbal information about incontinence products and how to obtain them, at the earliest opportunity, before you leave the hospital.

5

Participation

- If you have a decision to make about which treatment to have for your prostate cancer you should be given adequate time to consider all suitable treatment options. You should be supported by your consultant and nurse specialist to make a decision without feeling rushed.
- You should clearly understand the physical and emotional effects that treatment will have on your life afterwards. Your doctor and nurse should make sure you understand this before you decide on your treatment.

6

Privacy

- You should have access to specialist services for management of erectile dysfunction, in an environment that allows for privacy and ongoing assessment of your needs.
- If you have incontinence after treatment for prostate cancer you should have access to specialist advice and support regarding incontinence equipment and ways of coping with this side effect.

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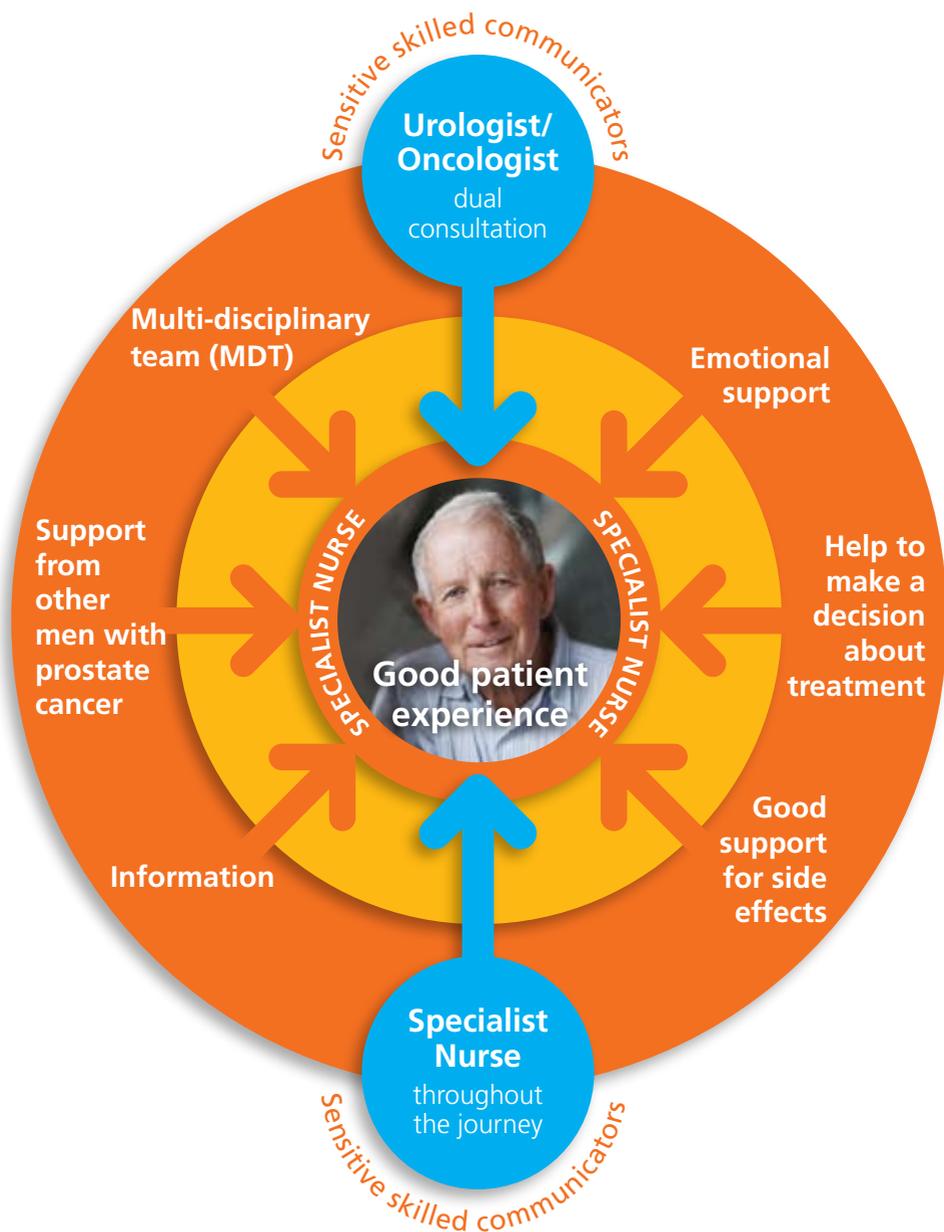
Improving Health

- If you are receiving hormone therapy you should have verbal and written information on prevention of side effects from such treatment. This should include information on diet, exercise and other activities that can help in the prevention of the possible side effects of hormone therapy.
- If you have erectile dysfunction, you should have information, advice and support from a specialist, on the treatment options, without undue waiting.



**Care & Support
at every stage**

Improving the patient experience





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For confidential advice, support and information on Prostate Cancer call the National Cancer Helpline on **freefone 1 800 200 700**

Mon - Thurs 9am - 7pm and Friday 9am - 5pm and speak to a specialist cancer nurse.

Or you can email: helpline@irishcancer.ie or visit the website www.cancer.ie

