

Improving Outcomes in Brain and Other CNS tumours

Draft Guidance

The paragraphs are numbered for the purposes of consultation. The final version will not contain numbered paragraphs.

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Foreword

1. This is the latest guidance document in the *Improving Outcomes in Cancer* series and gives advice on the service arrangements for patients with brain and other central nervous system (CNS) tumours. The great majority of patients whose care is covered by this guidance have brain tumours and some of the most important recommended changes largely apply to them. This is a group of patients whose care can be fragmented and uncoordinated, and who may face a lengthy period of physical and cognitive decline following their initial treatment, often without access to appropriate support and rehabilitation. I hope that the recommendations in the guidance will be seen as a constructive way of trying to improve this situation.
2. In addition there is guidance on the management of patients with the less common tumours of the CNS, some of whom require access to very specialised services and many of whom would benefit from more consistent care across the country. There are some very specific recommendations in this area.
3. I am very grateful to all the members of the guidance development group, especially the chair, Dr Penny Bridger, and the lead clinician, Dr Sean Elyan, who all gave so much of their time to the development of the guidance. I hope that all their hard work will be rewarded by significant improvements in the way that care is organised and delivered and, eventually, in clinical outcomes for these patients.
4. **Dr Fergus Macbeth**
5. Note: The title of the guidance uses the term 'brain and other CNS tumours'. This term is used once in each chapter but thereafter, for the sake of brevity, the term 'CNS tumours' is used, unless a specific group of patients is being referred to (e.g. 'pituitary tumours' or 'base of skull tumours'.)

Key recommendations

6.
 - The care of all patients with brain and other CNS tumours should be coordinated through:
 - a designated lead in every acute trust (see Box 1)
 - a neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours multidisciplinary team (MDT), usually based at a neuroscience centre (see Boxes 2 and 3)
 - a cancer network brain and other CNS tumours multidisciplinary team (MDT) (See Boxes 4 and 5)
 - a key worker
7.
 - Cancer networks should set up robust local mechanisms to ensure that every patient with imaging that suggests a diagnosis of CNS tumour is discussed by the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT without delay. This is to ensure confirmation of the radiological diagnosis and advice on further management, whatever the source of the initial referral for imaging and whether or not it is thought likely that specialist treatment is needed (see section on Presentation and Referral).
8.
 - Neuropathology and neuroradiology services should be provided to a level that ensures practitioners in these specialties can provide appropriate diagnostic investigations in a timely and efficient manner, complying with national cancer waiting times targets, can be involved in pre- and post-operative management decisions and intra-operative diagnosis, and neuropathologists can report to the standards detailed in the document *Minimum Datasets for CNS Tumours* (Royal College of Pathologists).¹
9.
 - There should be ready access to a neurosurgical biopsy or resection service, including image localisation and stereotactic techniques. Pre-

¹ The Royal College of Pathologists (2004) *Minimum dataset for the histopathological reporting of tumours of the central nervous system*. London: Royal College of Pathologists. Available from: www.rcpath.org

operative discussions should take place at the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT to determine the optimum approach to surgery and the processing of tissue specimens, including intra-operative histological evaluation.

10.
 - Healthcare professionals should have face to face communication with patients at critical points in the care pathway to discuss diagnosis, prognosis, treatment options (including no treatment), recurrence and end of life care. Clear, high quality and relevant written information material should be made available to support patients, carers and professionals in this process.
11. Clinical nurse specialists should be core members of the MDTs and may need to work across different geographical sites. They are likely to take on the role of key worker for many patients especially during the early stages of their clinical care, providing supportive care, information and continuity of care with other healthcare professionals.
12.
 - Patients should have ready access to specialist neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry for assessment and management of complex cognitive, emotional and behavioural problems, and to specialist healthcare professionals as appropriate for any other problems they may experience, such as epilepsy, headaches, functional loss, speech and language problems or visual problems.
13.
 - Palliative care specialists should be included as members of the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT and the cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT to provide advice on palliative and supportive care and the management of symptoms and to contribute to the patient's management plan.
14.
 - There should be rapid access to allied health professional (AHP) assessment and rehabilitation services, including specialist neurorehabilitation, as the patient's condition changes. There should be immediate access to specialist equipment, as necessary.

15.
 - Data collection systems should be in place that allow entry of information on all patients with a radiologically or histopathologically confirmed CNS tumour and made available to healthcare professionals. Consideration should be given to a web-based information system that will allow easy data sharing across the service.

16.
 - The National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Clinical Studies Group on brain tumours is encouraged to develop an extended portfolio of trials. Cancer networks will need to demonstrate how they intend to ensure that trials are supported and patient entry into these studies should be actively monitored.

17.
 - National tumour groups should be established to develop clinical guidelines and protocols for the investigation, management and clinical research of rare CNS tumours.

Chapter 1 - Background

Scope of the document

18. The purpose of this guidance is to describe key aspects of services required to achieve the best outcomes for adult patients with tumours of the brain and central nervous system (CNS). The document predominantly deals with primary tumours although metastases from other primary sites that require complex neurological or neurosurgical interventions are also included. Spinal cord compression due to metastatic tumours and ocular tumours are not included (see scope in Appendix 1).
19. The guidance covers all aspects of care for this group of patients from diagnosis onwards. The interface between services for adolescents and adults is covered in the recently published NICE guidance *Improving outcomes in children and young people with cancer* [1].
20. This cancer service guidance manual is intended to inform the commissioning and provision of services for people with brain and other CNS tumours. It will not offer the level of detail required to inform decision-making about specific treatments for individual patients. This background section is intended to inform non-specialist readers about this group of diseases and their management.

CNS tumours: nature

21. Primary CNS tumours are uncommon. The most numerous are brain tumours, which are said to account for only 1.6% of cancers in England and Wales [2]. The variety of pathological tumour types is large. In addition, the following four important characteristics of tumours in the CNS determine why the terms 'malignant tumour' (often equated with 'cancer') and 'benign tumour' lack validity when applied to this clinical setting:

- the cranium (skull), which surrounds the brain, is a rigid box, so that even a small, slowly growing tumour can cause severe symptoms and detrimental (even fatal) effects when it raises intracranial pressure.
 - slowly growing tumours in the brain can infiltrate extensively into adjacent normal tissue, which makes excision impossible.
 - the vital functions of the brain, in which these tumours arise, pose a particular challenge for surgical excision.
 - a slowly growing tumour may undergo transformation to an aggressive tumour.
22. Therefore, the terms 'high-grade tumour' and 'low-grade tumour' are preferred to define respectively a tumour that grows rapidly and is aggressive and a tumour that grows slowly, but which may or may not be successfully treated. These terms will be used in this guidance document. However, as national official registrations are compiled with the terms 'benign' and 'malignant' there is reference to these terms in this background chapter. High-grade tumours are grades 3 & 4 and low-grade tumours are grades 1 & 2 in the WHO classification (see appendix 2.1). The grade of CNS tumour correlates with prognosis (1-best; 4-worst).
23. In general, CNS tumours have a poor prognosis. Both their anatomical position and pathology play an important role in prognosis and decisions about appropriate investigation and treatment.
24. Sometimes, the risks of obtaining tissue for histopathological assessment are considered clinically unacceptable, and the patient is managed on the basis of a diagnosis made on neuroradiological features.
25. The anatomical location influences symptoms that include physical, cognitive and psychological components. For this reason, adults with CNS tumours pose a unique challenge to healthcare professionals; the patient may not be the best person to explain his or her symptoms and cognitive dysfunction may greatly increase the need for

psychological/psychiatric, social, and physical support. In view of the poor survival of many patients, even with optimal treatment, an important aspect of improving outcome is maximising quality of life.

Incidence prevalence, mortality and survival rates and trends

26. Approximately 6,500 primary tumours of the central nervous system in those aged 15 years and over were registered annually in England and Wales between 1995 and 2000, of which 58% were classed as 'malignant' (Table 1). There is, however, evidence of significant under-registration of intracranial tumours in the United Kingdom, particularly low grade tumours. It has been suggested that almost half of intracranial tumours are not recorded by cancer registries [3] [4].

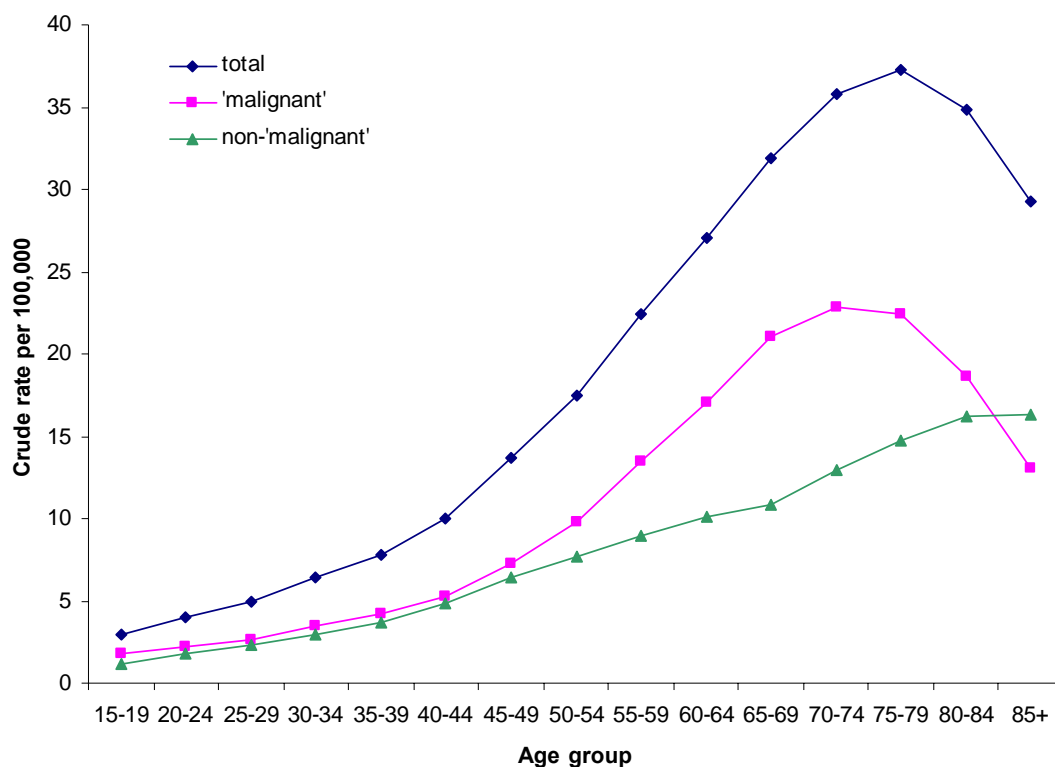


Figure 1 Age related rates per 100,000 population for total primary tumours, subdivided as 'malignant' / not 'malignant' 1995-2000.

Data supplied by the National Cancer Intelligence Centre of the Office for National Statistics and the Wales Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit.

27. The incidence of these tumours rises throughout adulthood (after a peak in childhood) to reach its highest among the 75-79 year age group at 37 registrations per 100,000 persons per year over the above mentioned six year period (Figure 1). Between the ten years 1991-2000 the rate of tumour registration increased by 17%. The rise was particularly marked in older age groups and registrations for these tumours more than doubled among the very elderly in that decade (Table 2). The reasons for this are unclear but may be due to more intensive investigation of neurological deficit in older patients in recent years. As the number of tumours registered in England and Wales has risen, hospital admissions recorded for this group of patients have also increased (Figure 2).

28. It is not known how many primary lymphomas of the CNS are registered in England and Wales each year, as the coding system used (ICD 10) does not readily distinguish these from primary lymphomas occurring in other sites. They are, however, rare accounting for approximately 2-3% of biopsied CNS tumours [5]. At a national level a substantial number of CNS tumours do not have specific morphology recorded², and so reliable data is not available for tumour subtypes defined by their morphology (for example, oligodendroglioma).
29. There are approximately 3,700 deaths per year in England and Wales among those aged 15 years and over where primary tumours of the CNS are given as the underlying cause. The majority of these are due to brain tumours. As with registrations, death rates among the very elderly, those aged over 85 years, attributed to tumours of the CNS have increased substantially in the decade between 1991 (13 per 100,000) and 2000 (26 per 100,000). As with incidence, this may be related to increased investigation (in particular CT and MRI scans) among this age group. Details of the recorded incidence and mortality of CNS tumours for England and Wales are shown in Table 1.

² 37% of brain tumours registered for England 1995-2000 had non-specific morphology codes (20% "neoplasm" malignant/benign/uncertain whether benign or malignant; 17% "glioma, malignant"). Data supplied by the National Cancer Intelligence Centre of the Office for National Statistics.

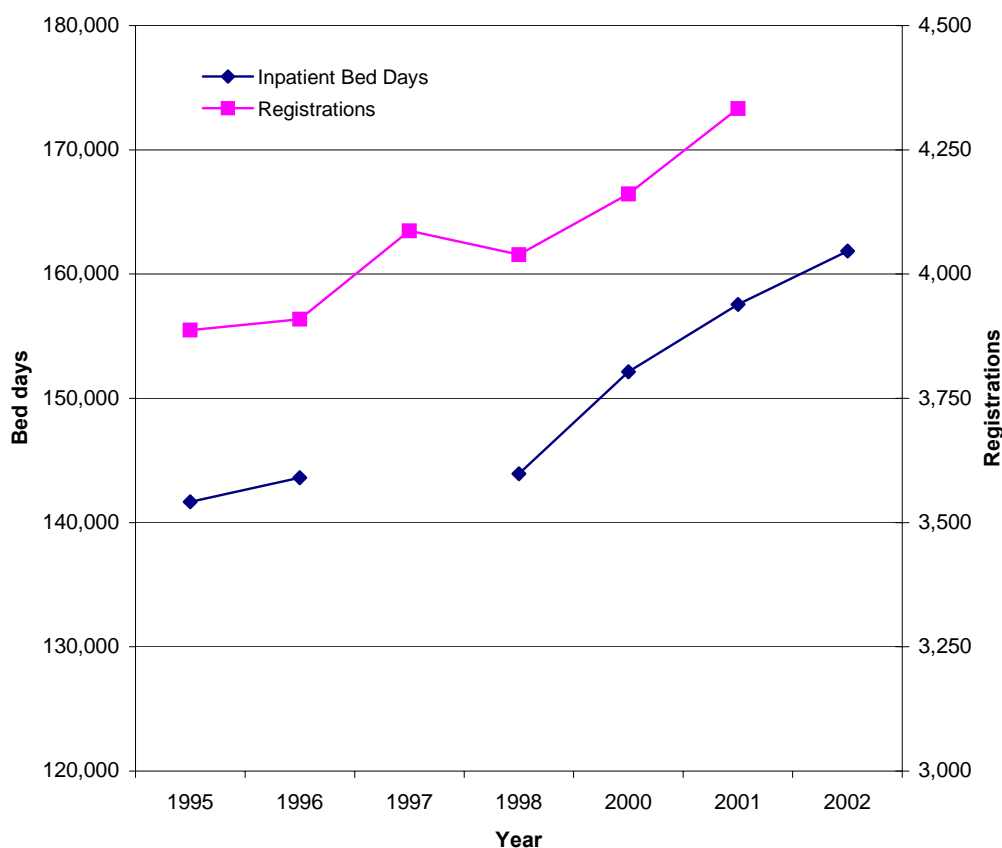


Figure 2 Inpatient bed days and registrations for patients with brain tumours ('benign', 'malignant' and 'uncertain') 1995-2002.

Hospital activity data represent any admission for patients with a known diagnosis of this tumour type.

Data supplied by the National Cancer Services Analysis Team (HES/PEDW data; year refers to commencement of financial year; incomplete data available for financial year 1997-8), National Cancer Intelligence Centre of the Office for National Statistics and the Wales Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit.

Table 1 Registrations and mortality from primary brain and central nervous system tumours in England and Wales, 1995-2000, persons \geq 15yrs.

	Registrations			Mortality	
	Number per annum	Crude rate per 100,000 \geq 15	Male:Female ratio (rates)	Number per annum	Crude rate per million \geq 15
Brain tumours					
Brain					
Malignant	3550	8.54	1.44	2691.2	64.74
Benign / uncertain behaviour	520	1.25	1.04	699.2	16.82
Intracranial meningiomas					
Malignant	54	0.13	0.85	18.0	0.43
Benign / uncertain behaviour	758	1.82	0.46	226.5	5.45
Spinal					
Spinal cord					
Malignant	69	0.17	1.38	21.5	0.52
Benign / uncertain behaviour	56	0.13	1.12	0.8	0.02
Spinal meninges					
Malignant	5	0.01	0.65	0.5	0.01
Benign / uncertain behaviour	60	0.14	0.27	1.2	0.03
Pituitary tumours*					
Malignant	29	0.07	0.99	7.8	0.19
Benign / uncertain behaviour	661	1.59	1.13	31.0	0.75
Cranial nerve					
Malignant	17	0.04	1.27	2.8	0.07
Benign / uncertain behaviour	412	0.99	1.02	17.8	0.43
Pineal					
Malignant	19	0.05	4.29	5.0	0.12
Benign / uncertain behaviour	13	0.03	0.66	1.7	0.04
Other registered as CNS					
Malignant	24	0.06	0.75	9.7	0.23
Benign / uncertain behaviour	215	0.52	0.58	0.5	0.01
Total malignant	3767	9.06	1.42	2748.8	66.13
Total benign / uncertain	2694	6.48	0.79	986.3	23.73
Total	6462	15.54	1.11	3735.2	89.86

Data supplied by the National Cancer Intelligence Centre of the Office for National Statistics and the Wales Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit. Due to ICD coding CNS lymphomas are not distinguished as a separate group. Registrations (ICD 10) and mortality (ICD 9) codes may not match exactly. *Including craniopharyngeal tumours.

Table 2 Primary brain / CNS tumours age specific registration rates per 100,000 persons per year among those 15 years of age and older; selected ages x year (1991-2000).

	15-19	30-34	45-49	55-59	65-69	75-79	85+	All ages
1991	2.7	6.4	14.0	23.1	27.7	31.1	18.4	13.7
1992	3.5	6.9	14.7	22.5	33.1	31.6	20.0	15.1
1993	3.0	7.4	13.6	22.9	32.2	30.1	20.7	14.7
1994	3.4	6.7	13.1	20.9	30.3	35.9	22.6	14.7
1995	2.7	6.9	13.1	23.3	29.7	34.9	23.7	15.2
1996	2.5	6.2	13.6	22.5	32.1	34.3	25.6	15.3
1997	2.8	6.8	14.7	23.9	34.6	37.7	27.9	15.8
1998	2.8	6.1	13.8	20.7	30.8	35.5	28.9	15.4
1999	3.5	5.9	13.2	22.9	32.7	39.0	31.4	15.6
2000	3.2	6.8	13.8	21.3	31.4	41.5	37.3	16.1

Double line indicates transition from ICD 9 to ICD 10, definitions of tumour groups included do not match exactly across this transition. 'All ages' refers to crude rate in those aged 15 and over. Data supplied by the National Cancer Intelligence Centre of the Office for National Statistics and the Wales Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit.

30. Survival of those with brain tumours classed as 'malignant' (ICD10 C70) is poor, and is shown in Table 3. Relative survival has decreased in the last 20 years. The increased incidence in the elderly does not explain the decrease in relative survival, but an increased tendency to investigate severe disability in the elderly and hence diagnose poor prognosis tumours, may be a contributing factor. The EURO CARE-3 study [6], with participating registries from both England and Wales, showed 5-year age standardised relative survival rates similar to those among other participating registries of other countries of Europe although both England and Wales were among the lower range for 1 year survival (table 3).

Table 3 One and five year age standardised relative survival (95% confidence intervals) for adults diagnosed (1990-1994) with 'malignant' brain tumour (ICD-9 191), participating registers for Eurocare study, England Wales and Europe.

	Men		Women	
	One year	Five year	One year	Five year
England	31.7 (30.7 - 32.8)	15.7 (14.9 - 16.7)	34.2 (32.9 - 35.4)	17.9 (16.8 - 19)
Wales	33.8 (30.2 - 37.8)	17.5 (14.3 - 21.4)	33.6 (29.9 - 37.8)	19.7 (16.1 - 24.1)
Europe	37 (35.6 - 38.5)	16.4 (15.2 - 17.6)	39 (37.4 - 40.7)	18.5 (17.1 - 20)

Table 4 One and five year age standardised relative survival (95% confidence intervals) for men and women aged 15-99 diagnosed with 'malignant' brain tumours (ICD-10 C70) in 1991-1995 and 1996-1999, England and Wales.

	Patients diagnosed 1991-95		Patients diagnosed 1996-99		Difference*	
	One-year	Five-year	One-year	Five-year	One-year	Five-year
Men	30.8 (30.0 - 31.7)	13 (12.4 - 13.7)	32.2 (31.3 - 33.2)	12.5 (11.6 - 13.4)	1.4	-0.5
Women	32.2 (31.2 - 33.2)	15.4 (14.5 - 16.2)	32.1 (31.0 - 33.3)	15.3 (14.2 - 16.4)	-0.1	-0.1

* The difference (in percentage points) between the relative survival rates for patients diagnosed in 1991-95 and in 1996-99 [7].

31. As the proportion of elderly in the population increases the incidence of CNS tumours is expected to rise. Based on the Government Actuary's Department figures [8] and the average number of registrations for CNS tumours between 1995 and 2000, Figure 3 demonstrates the predicted registrations of tumours of the CNS up to 2041. The growth in registrations may be greater than predicted if the trend of increased incidence of CNS tumours among elderly people continues.

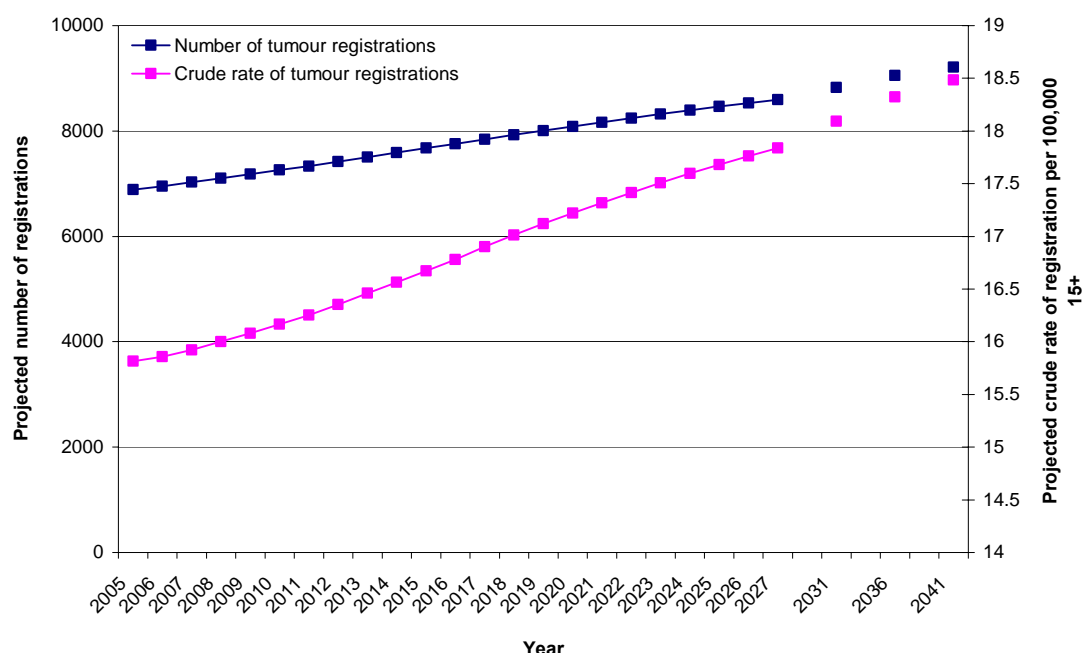


Figure 3 Predicted numbers and crude rates of brain and central nervous system tumour registrations based on age and sex specific rates 1995-2000; age ≥ 15.

Classification of tumours

32. The classification of CNS tumours is complex, and various classifications have been developed since that of Bailey and Cushing in the 1920s [9]. The World Health Organization (WHO) produced a classification in 1993, most recently updated in 1999 [10]. The use of this classification is now endorsed by professional bodies (Royal College of Pathologists [11]) and the European Network of Cancer Registries [12]. It is also used as part of the United Kingdom National External Quality Assessment Service [13] for laboratory and diagnostic neuropathology. This classification divides CNS tumours into the basic types of tumours of neuroepithelial tissue, including what are often described as gliomas, tumours of the peripheral nerves, tumours of the meninges, lymphomas and haematopoietic neoplasms, tumours of the sellar region, and metastatic tumours. Each type has further subdivisions.
33. The usefulness of this WHO classification in epidemiological terms is limited by the fact that tissue from tumours of the CNS is not always available for analysis. Also, the system used to collect statistics on pathology of CNS tumour registrations at a national level does not conform to this WHO classification.
34. For simplicity and ease of understanding, the guidance classifies tumours into the categories of brain tumours, and rarer CNS tumours, in particular: intradural spinal cord tumours, skull base tumours, pituitary tumours, optic tract gliomas, primary CNS lymphomas, medulloblastomas and pineal tumours.

Aetiology and risk factors

35. The aetiology of tumours of the CNS is largely unknown. The only unequivocally identified causative factors are inherited cancer syndromes and, in rare cases, ionising radiation [14]. Immunosuppression, for example, due to the acquired immune

deficiency syndrome (AIDS), is a well-recognised cause of cerebral lymphoma [15].

36. The risk of developing CNS tumours is dependent on age and gender (see above), and also shows an inverse social gradient; tumours of the brain are more common among more affluent groups [16], and this is also true for mortality. The reverse trend is evident for brain metastases [17].
37. Geographical variation in CNS tumours is less than for most human neoplasms. Less developed countries have a lower incidence than more developed countries. There is also evidence that in multicultural communities those of African or Asian descent have a lower incidence than those of Caucasian descent. Japan is a developed country with a particularly low level of reported tumours although it is not clear if this is related to inadequate registration [18]. There is no consistent regional variation within England and Wales [19].

Familial syndromes with an increased risk of tumours of the CNS

38. There are a number of familial syndromes that give rise to an increased risk of tumours of the CNS, and these are shown in Table 4. These are, in general, autosomal dominant conditions [20], and many have distinctive skin features (phakomatoses). Neurofibromatosis type I (NF1) is the most common of these syndromes with a prevalence of 1 in 3,000 [21]. Neurofibromatosis type II (NF2) has an incidence of about 1 in 40,000 [22]. Multiple endocrine neoplasia type I, associated with pituitary tumours, is sometimes included in this group [23].

Table 5 Inheritable syndromes carrying an increased risk for CNS neoplasms.

Syndrome	Gene	Chromosome	Nervous system
Neurofibromatosis type 1	NF1	17q11	Neurofibromas, malignant nerve sheath tumour, optic nerve gliomas, astrocytoma
Neurofibromatosis type 2	NF2	22q12	Bilateral acoustic schwannomas, multiple meningiomas, astrocytomas, glial hamartomata
von Hippel-Lindau Syndrome	VHL	3p25	Haemangioblastomas
Tuberous sclerosis	TSC1 TSC 2	9q34 16p13	Subependymal giant cell astrocytoma, cortical tubers
Li-Fraumeni	p53	17p13	Astrocytomas / PNET
Cowden's disease	PTEN	10q23	Dysplastic gangliocytoma of the cerebellum
Turcot's syndrome	APC HMLH1 HPSM2	5q21 3p21 7p22	Medulloblastoma Glioblastoma
Naevoid basal cell carcinoma syndrome (Gorlin's syndrome)	PTCH	9q22	Medulloblastoma

Source: adopted from [24] [25] [26].

Symptoms, diagnosis and treatment

39. CNS tumours can result in a wide range of physical, cognitive and psychological symptoms. The list of differential diagnoses is considerable, and the incidence of many of these alternatives is usually far greater than brain tumours, such that these may be exhaustively explored before the diagnosis of a CNS tumour is considered. Consequently, for some patients and families there is a long delay from first symptoms to reaching a diagnosis causing considerable stress and anxiety [27].

Brain tumours

40. Brain tumours account for the majority of CNS tumours. In this document they are taken to include all primary intracranial tumours apart from rare and unusual tumours considered separately. In particular this group includes tumours of the brain substance itself, many of which arise from the glial or support cells of the brain, for example, glioblastoma multiforme. Glial tumours (gliomas) may be considered low grade (grade I and II, less aggressive) or high grade

(grade III and IV, more aggressive) in accordance with the WHO classification of tumours of the nervous system (see appendix 2.1). It also includes tumours that arise from the tissues around the brain such as tumours of the meninges, and metastases from other primary sites that require complex neurological or neurosurgical interventions.

41. In spite of the variety of brain tumour pathologies, presentation tends to be related either to a) headache with cognitive or behavioural symptoms, b) epilepsy, c) progressive focal neurological deficits, or d) headache with raised intracranial pressure.
42. Headache accompanied by cognitive, memory or behavioural symptoms is a common presentation and patients are often slow to present because of the wide differential diagnosis.
43. Adult onset epilepsy is a common feature of brain tumours, and may present as either focal or generalised seizures. It usually presents without other neurological symptoms or signs.
44. Focal neurological deficits may result in a large variety of symptoms depending on the part of the neurological system affected. Gradual onset weakness or sensory loss on one side of the body is common as is difficulty with speech or understanding. Occasionally patients present with unilateral visual field loss.
45. Raised intracranial pressure typically causes headaches, which may be worse in the morning, nausea and vomiting or visual deterioration. More severe raised intracranial pressure may be associated with altered levels of consciousness, and this may be in the form of lethargy or somnolence in the early stages. Swelling of the optic disc (papilloedema) is a sign that may be present when there is raised intracranial pressure.
46. The diagnosis of a possible brain tumour is first indicated following imaging of the brain, with either computed tomography or magnetic resonance imaging. The diagnosis is confirmed by surgical biopsy,

which allows histopathological classification, though in a few cases biopsy is either not feasible or clinically inappropriate.

47. Management of these tumours depends on their anatomical position and their pathological type. Tumours within the skull, but outside the brain, such as meningiomas, can often be completely excised with a very good prognosis. Tumours within the brain, such as gliomas, can rarely be completely removed because of the relationship to critical structures and the infiltrating nature of the tumour. Depending on the type of tumour (for example, high grade glioma) there may be benefit associated with treatment by resection, radiotherapy, chemotherapy or a combination. Steroids are often used to reduce intracranial pressure or to try and improve focal signs e.g. weakness on one side. The majority of patients will also require input from a variety of healthcare professionals, including allied health professionals, and those providing psychological help and support for patients and their carers.

Rarer CNS tumours

48. In this document, rarer CNS tumours are those considered to be sufficiently uncommon to warrant specialist input beyond that required for those brain tumours included above.

Spinal tumours

49. Primary tumours of the spinal cord are very uncommon. Patients with these tumours are likely to present with focal neurological symptoms relating to compression or invasion of nerve roots or the spinal cord itself. Pain along a nerve root is a common initial symptom.
50. Tumours around the spinal cord such as meningiomas, and nerve sheath tumours, often schwannomas, are more likely to grow slowly. Complete excision may lead to a good prognosis, although their location may pose technical difficulties. This guidance includes services for nerve sheath tumours that cause compression of the spinal cord, and chordomas (an uncommon tumour that may occur in the sacral or

cervical regions); it does not cover services for spinal cord compression due to metastatic tumours. In contrast to tumours around the spinal cord, such as meningiomas, intrinsic tumours of the spinal cord, mostly astrocytomas, are usually high grade. However, they do not usually expand rapidly and are usually treated by surgery and/or radiotherapy.

Skull base tumours

51. The term 'skull base tumour' does not appear in formal classifications of CNS tumours, and does not specify the pathological type. The term refers to multiple tumour types that occur at this anatomical location, for example, acoustic schwannoma (a cranial nerve tumour), some meningiomas and invasive tumours from adjacent sites such as nasal tumours. These tumours may cause specific symptoms due to damage to structures in the region, such as cranial nerves resulting in palsies, difficulty with balance or hearing. Patients with acoustic schwannoma often present with hearing loss on one side (90%), and many experience tinnitus (70%) [28]. The progress of symptoms is highly variable depending on tumour type.

Pituitary tumours

52. Pituitary tumours may be functional and secrete hormones, or non-functional. Larger tumours (>1cm) are usually non-functional [29]. Symptoms may either be the result of hormone secretion or of pressure effects. Pressure on the pituitary gland / hypothalamus may result in hormonal imbalance (for example, hypopituitarism) and pressure on the optic chiasma / optic nerves in visual disturbance. Craniopharyngiomas, more common in children, also arise in the sellar region, and are grouped with pituitary tumours in this guidance.
53. Diagnosis of these tumours is primarily by imaging, although hormonal measurements are also important. Apart from any hormonal or medical treatment that may be required, the management of these tumours is surgical resection, which may be undertaken by either the trans-sphenoidal or by standard craniotomy approaches [30].

Other rarer CNS tumours

54. Some tumour groupings are very rare. For example in England and Wales there are 0.08 registrations of pineal tumours per 100,000 population per year (that is, 32 registrations). Some rarer tumours have been given particular attention in the guidance due to their specific needs. These include primary central nervous system lymphomas, which has been increasing in incidence globally due to the AIDS epidemic [31]. Immunocompetent patients show treatment response rates of 85%, with 2 and 5 year survivals of 40-70% and 25%-45% respectively. Outlook is much poorer for patients with AIDS, where median survival is 2-6 months [32].
55. Medulloblastoma requires particular attention due to its biological behaviour; in particular its tendency to spread through the neuraxis. Pineal tumours, and in particular germ cell tumours, may be curable with appropriate management. Optic pathway gliomas, which usually present with visual disturbance, may be associated with neurofibromatosis type I, which usually occurs in children and the uncertainties surrounding their treatment requires specialist input.

NHS services for patients with CNS tumours

56. Services for patients with tumours of the CNS are provided in all healthcare sectors. Primary healthcare teams and local acute hospitals often provide essential services for these patients; however, as these tumours are rare, the role of specialised services is particularly important.
57. The route of care for patients may be complex because catchment areas for neuroscience centres and oncology/radiotherapy centres often do not coincide and may not match well with the boundaries of cancer networks or strategic health authorities. An analysis was undertaken of the catchment areas of the 27 neuroscience centres, as mapped by NATCANSAT for this guidance, and the 37 cancer networks covering England and Wales. Only 10 of these units cover

areas contained within 1 network, 16 of the other neuroscience centre catchment areas cover more than 1 network area³. As a result of this incongruity it has been necessary in this guidance to distinguish functions that occur at a cancer network level from those that occur at the neuroscience / neurosurgical unit level.

58. Patients may present to general practitioners, accident and emergency departments, or other acute medical services before being referred on to specialist services. The average general practitioner (GP) would see approximately one new patient every seven years with a primary brain tumour and one new patient every four years with a primary CNS tumour.
59. The following description of services is based on a survey of neuroscience centres (with the assistance of the Society of British Neurological Surgeons) and oncology/radiotherapy units undertaken to inform this guidance in England and Wales during early 2004.

Neurosurgical services

60. Neuroscience centres are often the first specialist service to which patients with tumours of the CNS are referred. There are 27 units providing neurosurgical services to adults in England and Wales. Most are based within a university hospital (78%), and their self-estimated population ranges from 1 to 3.5 million (average 2.2 million persons). Obtaining information on the total number of new patients with CNS tumours seen by a unit per year is difficult because of the variation in the way data are (or are not) collected by the units; however estimates given varied widely from 63 new patients to 6-700 (median 190).
61. For CNS tumours as a whole there is little evidence of specialisation among neurosurgeons; in virtually all units in England and Wales all neurosurgeons perform surgery on CNS tumours. However, for some subtypes of tumours, in particular pituitary, and acoustic nerve / skull base tumours there is a high level of specialisation with only one or two

³ For one of the London units the relationship was unclear from the analysis.

surgeons performing procedures in most units. Most neuroscience centres have clinical nurse specialists in neuro-oncology (80%) although the role varies from unit to unit. Often a key function of clinical nurse specialists in neuro-oncology is the coordination of services for patients.

62. Increasingly, multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) are being established for CNS tumours. In the report by the Commission for Health Improvement on NHS cancer care in England and Wales [33], based on visits during 2000/2001, about a third of acute trusts providing services for CNS tumours had defined MDTs. In the survey undertaken for this guidance, 2003/04, 80% of neuroscience centres reported that they had established MDTs. Almost half of units have specific MDTs for pituitary tumours, many have MDTs for base of skull tumours and other specific types of CNS tumours.
63. Specialist clinics for patients with CNS tumours were described in 40% of units. These may be joint clinics with oncologists (22% of units), endocrinologists (19% of units) or otolaryngologists (15% of units). In some cases there were nurse-led tumour clinics, and an epilepsy nurse was also present.
64. The survey showed that allied health professionals were available on-site in all the neuro-oncology units, but in a third of units there was no palliative care consultant or palliative care nurse available on-site.

Oncology and radiotherapy services

65. The survey of the 52 radiotherapy units in England and Wales (92% response rate) found that almost all of these units (94%) undertake CNS tumour work. Although a number are standalone, approximately 40% are located in university / teaching hospitals and 40% in district general hospitals. These units each see between 17 and 350 neuro-oncology patients a year.
66. Oncology / radiotherapy units may provide treatments such as inpatient and outpatient chemotherapy and radical or palliative radiotherapy.

There appears to be variation among units not only in the types of treatment provided [34], but also access to these services. Mean waiting times quoted for a patient with CNS tumour to start radical radiotherapy varied from less than 1 week to 8-12 weeks.

67. All but one unit reported having some degree of specialisation among oncologists for CNS tumours. More than half the units (56%) have clinical nurse specialists in neuro-oncology.
68. Around three quarters of units have access to a MDT either on-site, or at another site, for their patients. Multiple site MDTs exist, where either several units communicate by videoconference, or conclusions are passed on to treating clinicians who may not attend the meetings. In some cases a local expert team is available to provide support in a smaller unit without an MDT.
69. Many allied health professionals are available on-site in all or almost all units. Just under half of units have on-site access to neuropsychological / neuropsychiatric services, and two thirds of units have on-site access to a neurologist with an interest in epilepsy.

Specialist neurorehabilitation units

70. Almost all neuroscience centres (96%) reported having access to a specialist neurorehabilitation unit in England and Wales. Access to specialist neurorehabilitation units was much lower for oncology / radiotherapy units at 60% of units.

Stereotactic radiosurgery

71. Stereotactic radiosurgery is a specialised technique designed to focus high doses of ionising radiation on a tumour, while sparing normal tissue. Much of the stereotactic radiosurgery is undertaken at the national centre in Sheffield. However there are eight centres in total in England and Wales to whom patients are referred by neuroscience centres for stereotactic radiosurgery.

Commissioning services for neuro-oncology

72. All bodies which commission services for adults with CNS tumours within each cancer network should work together to ensure that these services function in a coordinated way. As many neuroscience units cover more than one cancer network area it is important that networks collaborate and pool resources to deliver a full range of services.

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Chapter 2 - Multidisciplinary teams

73. Patients with brain and other CNS tumours have very particular clinical needs which mean that the arrangements for their care need to be structured quite differently from those with the more common cancers. Their healthcare needs are complex because of a number of factors:
- Many patients are severely disabled by their disease
 - Many patients have a poor prognosis
 - They present through a variety of specialties
 - There are significant differences in the care needs of patients with tumours of different histological types and arising in different parts of the CNS
 - Many tumour subtypes are extremely rare
 - Many patients experience long term progressive cognitive, physical and emotional problems
74. This section describes the organisation of care for the majority of patients i.e. those with brain gliomas, meningiomas or metastatic tumours. Specific specialist care is required for those with spinal cord and other less common tumours and this is described in more detail in the treatment and follow-up sections.
75. Patients present in a variety of different ways. Patients are referred by their general practitioner (GP) to one of a number of specialties including neurology, acute services (such as acute medicine), ophthalmology, endocrinology, radiology or orthopaedics. First line investigations, including imaging, are normally carried out at the local hospital. Radiological imaging (CT or MRI, see section on diagnosis – pathology and radiology) is essential in the diagnosis of these patients

and is the first point at which a suspected diagnosis of a CNS tumour is made which prompts entry into the MDT.

76. Because of the very varied initial treatment options for these patients, the definition and measurement of key time points for the monitoring of 'cancer waiting times' may need careful consideration and general agreement. It is important that a consistent approach is adopted within and across MDTs.
77. The MDT is pivotal in the management of these patients and attendance of healthcare professionals at the multidisciplinary meetings is essential. They should form part of the timetabled activities of core members.
78. All patients, including those who have had emergency surgery, need to have their clinical history and images reviewed by a specialist neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT, whether or not they go on to have further active treatment.
79. Once the initial treatment (surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy or a combination) is completed, many patients will have a prolonged period of follow-up, with input from a variety of support services, either to monitor the effects of treatment, or to manage gradual physical or neuropsychological decline. Many of the continuing rehabilitation, supportive and palliative care needs are met by allied health professionals (AHPs) and these services need to be provided as near to the patient's home as possible. During this time all of their aspects of care should be properly assessed and addressed, and immediate access provided to the appropriate services.
80. This guidance, together with the *Manual for cancer services*,⁴ is explicit in describing the role of core members of the MDT. It is recognised that in the UK up to 30% of patients handled by individual neuroscience

⁴ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

centres may fall into the scope of this guidance⁵. The Society of British Neurosurgeons, currently implementing new manpower and training needs under the process of Modernising Medical Careers, has recognised that training and service demands will need to develop to achieve the supply of neurosurgeons specialising in CNS tumours.

81. As the management of patients with CNS tumours is often provided in different care settings, it is important that their care is, at all stages, adequately coordinated. This may be best achieved by ensuring that every patient has a clearly identified *Key Worker*⁶ who is the identified point of contact for patients and carers, is responsible for ensuring the supportive care needs of the patients and carers are met and for coordinating care across the patient pathway. The role of the key worker is outlined in the NICE guidance *Improving Supportive and Palliative care for Adults with Cancer*⁷ (Chapter 1 – Co-ordination of care and recommendation 1.29).
82. The clinical nurse specialist role is well established in oncology and clinical neuroscience. The emphasis of the role is to provide continuity throughout the patient pathway. As a member of the multidisciplinary team, neuro-oncology clinical nurse specialists provide a variety of services: advice, information and supportive care to patients and their carers, assessment of patient and carers' needs and facilitation of appropriate referrals to allied health professionals (AHPs), palliative care and community services. The role also involves the co-ordination of services, provision of consultative advice to hospital and community teams and education to healthcare professionals working with this group of patients.

⁵ An Assessment of Need for Cancer Services for People with Brain and other CNS tumours in England and Wales. See evidence review.

⁶ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services. Topic 2A The generic multidisciplinary team*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

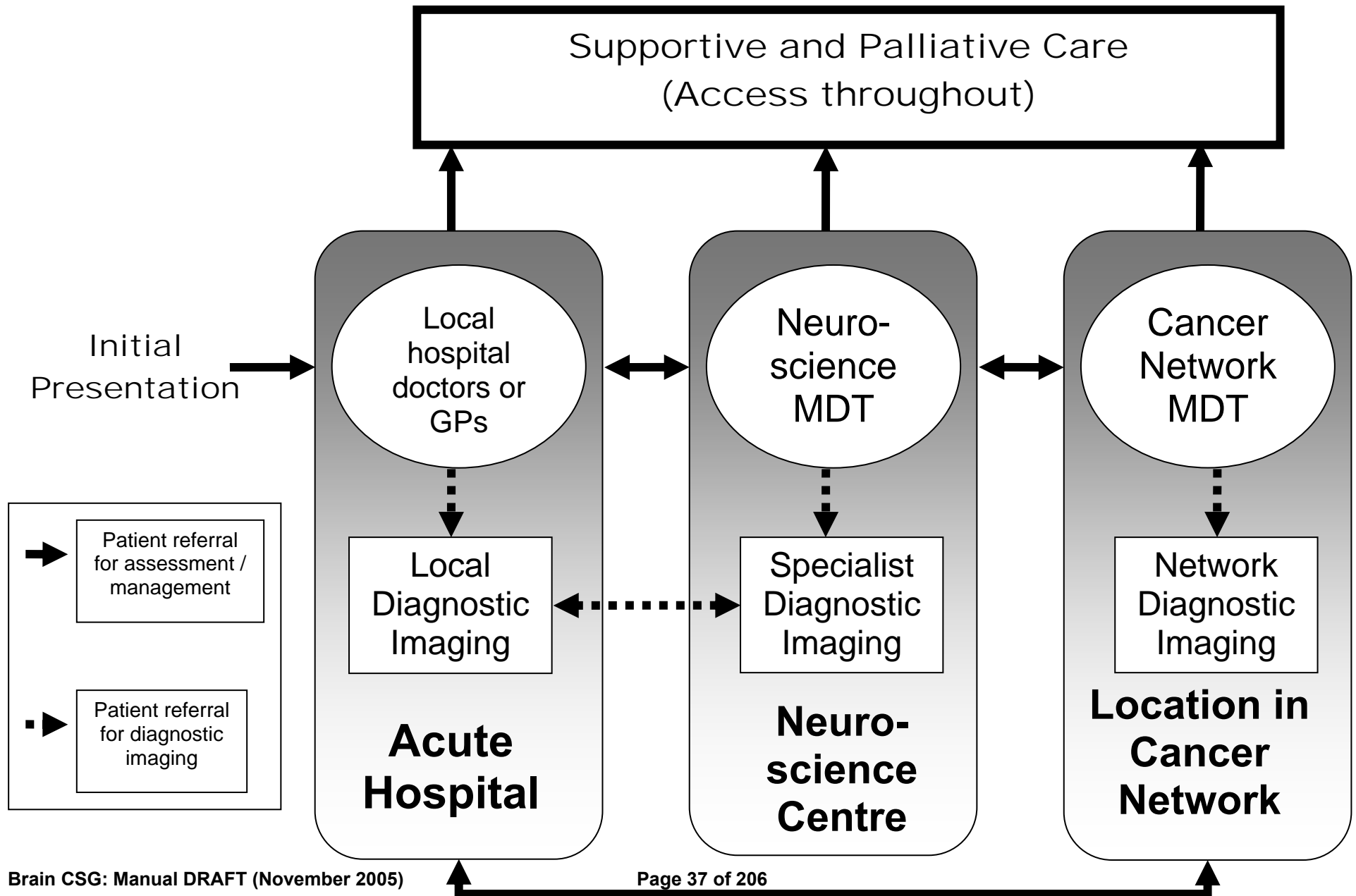
⁷ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

83. Some neuro-oncology clinical nurse specialist posts are peripatetic and will cover both the neuroscience centre and the oncology/radiotherapy centre. Other services cover a large geographical area and in these instances there may be clinical nurse specialists at the neuroscience centre and the oncology/radiotherapy centre. While patient care is being managed at either the neuroscience centre or the oncology/radiotherapy centre it is likely that the clinical nurse specialist will take on the role of key worker.
84. These patients require a multidisciplinary approach to their care throughout their illness and follow-up, with continuing input from a variety of rehabilitation and support services. The patient pathway must be structured to ensure that access to appropriate services is always safe, easy and equitable. At all stages of the patient pathway, there may be a need to involve members of the AHP and supportive and palliative care services in order to address the patient's problems.
85. Appropriate clinical assessments are essential at three specific times:
1. when the diagnosis of a CNS tumour is initially suggested by radiological investigations and appropriate onward referral is arranged.
 2. when the diagnosis of CNS tumour is reviewed, usually in conjunction with further radiological and pathological diagnostic tests, and when the initial management plan (as defined in Box 2), which may or may not include neurosurgery and/or adjuvant therapy, is determined.
 3. when any indicated adjuvant therapy is instigated, and when further clinical review and initial and continuing access to rehabilitation, supportive and palliative care services are arranged.
86. It is possible that some patients may have all their care coordinated and delivered in one location. But, as is clear from the Background section, the population served by neuroscience centres and cancer

networks are different in many parts of the country. Where they coincide it should be easier to coordinate the necessary care, but where they differ, very clear arrangements for referral and continuing management are essential to ensure that patients get the most appropriate care.

87. Fundamental to ensuring efficient clinical care when patients are managed by different teams on different sites is good communication. Figure 4 summarises the flow of information through the patient pathway.

Figure 4: Brain and Other CNS Tumours Patient Pathway



A. Recommendations

88. Because of the particular needs of these patients and the complexity of the care that they require, often provided at different locations, the recommended model of multidisciplinary assessment and care is novel and quite different from that for many other tumours.
89. The care of all patients with CNS tumours should be coordinated through
- a **designated lead** in every acute trust (see Box 1)
 - a **neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT**, usually based at a neuroscience centre (see Boxes 2 and 3)
 - a **cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT** (see Boxes 4 and 5)
 - a **key worker**.
90. Where the population served by the neuroscience centre and the cancer network are the same, the neuroscience MDT and cancer network MDT may involve many of the same healthcare professionals but their responsibilities will be distinct (see below). In many places there will, however, need to be separate MDTs with close working relationships (see Background section).
91. All bodies which commission services for adults with CNS tumours within each cancer network should work together to ensure that these services function in a coordinated way. As many neuroscience units cover more than one cancer network area it is important that networks collaborate and pool resources to deliver a full range of services.
92. The establishment of teleconferencing facilities will need to be considered if geography makes it difficult for core team members to attend MDT meetings in person.

93. Neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT and cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT should define their patient pathways

Designated lead

94. In every acute hospital there should be clearly defined mechanisms, coordinated by a designated lead for the Trust (see Box 1), for referring all patients with suspected primary CNS tumours to the neuroscience MDT. These should ensure that clinical summaries for discussion and imaging scans of all patients with suspected primary CNS tumours are sent as soon as possible for review.

Multidisciplinary teams

Designated coordinator

95. Each neuroscience MDT should have a designated coordinator whose responsibilities include obtaining the imaging of patients with CNS tumours from radiology departments in their catchment. In addition the designated coordinator will obtain clinical summaries requested by the neuroscience MDT lead clinician (see Box 6).

MDT lead clinician

96. It is the responsibility of the neuroscience MDT lead clinician to ensure that processes are in place so that information is obtained about these patients directly from the clinician who arranged the imaging if this is not forthcoming.

Neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT

97. The responsibilities and membership of the neuroscience MDT should be as defined in Box 2 and 3 respectively.
98. All specialist neurosurgeons treating patients with CNS tumours should be core members of the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT.

99. The neuroscience MDT (see Boxes 2 and 3) will review the case history and images and suggest a management plan which will be communicated back to the appropriate consultant. This plan might suggest referral of the patient for neurosurgical or oncological management or continuing care locally.
100. The neuroscience MDT should meet at weekly intervals to review all new cases and advise on their initial management in accordance with national cancer waiting times standards. Where emergency intervention is necessary on clinical grounds, particularly out of hours, this should proceed to agreed protocols prior to discussion by the neuroscience MDT. The operating surgeon will present such a patient to the next available neuroscience MDT for discussion and referral, if necessary, to an appropriate core member. Patients reviewed and discussed previously should be referred back to the neuroscience MDT by the cancer network MDT for advice on further surgery or specialist interventions on relapse and according to agreed protocols.
101. The neuroscience MDT, in collaboration with the cancer network MDT, should develop, regularly review and audit evidence-based protocols for the management of patients with CNS tumours.
102. Following surgery or a decision by the neuroscience MDT that surgery would be inappropriate, the continuing management and specialist supportive care should be provided according to protocol under the supervision of the cancer network MDT.
103. There may be some frail patients in whom active medical intervention is not considered appropriate. After review of the imaging and clinical summary at the neuroscience MDT these patients will not be seen at the neuroscience centre but referred to the cancer network MDT to arrange appropriate assessment locally by a member of the MDT.

Clinical nurse specialist

104. Clinical nurse specialists should be core members of the MDTs and may need to work across different geographical sites. They are likely to take on the role of key worker for many patients especially during the early stages of their clinical care, providing supportive care, information and continuity of care with other healthcare professionals.

Key worker

105. All patients should have a clearly identified key worker⁸ as nominated by the neuroscience or cancer network MDT.
106. The key worker should promote continuity of care and manage transitions of care. This is achieved by assessing patients' needs, ensuring care plans have been agreed with patients and that findings from assessments and care plans are communicated to others involved in a patient's care. Coordination of care across the patient pathway will also include ensuring referral of the patient to the appropriate multidisciplinary services at any time.
107. The keyworker should ensure that patients and carers know who to contact when help and advice is needed. The key worker is likely to be the clinical nurse specialist or allied health professional (AHP) most closely involved with the patient's care.
108. The key worker role should be transferred to the most appropriate healthcare professional as the patient's needs change, for example neurosurgeon, neurologist, GP, community nurse, AHP, palliative care team member or at transitional points in the patient pathway e.g. neuroscience centre, oncology/radiotherapy centre, community.
109. The patient and carer should be informed of who their key worker is and how their keyworker may be contacted.

⁸ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services. Topic 2A The generic multidisciplinary team*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

Cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT

110. The responsibilities and membership of the cancer network MDT should be as defined in Box 4 and 5 respectively.
111. The cancer network MDT (see Boxes 4 and 5) should meet at least monthly to coordinate care for 5 to 15 new patients monthly and monitor the ongoing care of approximately 50-100 follow-up patients.

Box 1 Designated lead.

The **designated lead** will coordinate care at a trust level for all the hospitals within that trust. It is likely to be the role of the trust cancer lead clinician at the hospital or delegated to an appropriate consultant colleague. S/he is NOT clinically responsible for the individual patients, but will ensure that mechanisms are in place for the following:

- The receipt and management / processing of GP referrals of patients with suspected CNS tumours.
- The direct referral of patients to the neuroscience, spinal, pituitary or skull base MDTs as appropriate.
- Radiology department(s) make imaging scans and reports concerning suspected CNS tumours available to the neuroscience MDT.
- Timely communication between hospital clinicians, the neuroscience MDT and the cancer network MDT where these exist as separate teams.
- Implementing actions within the Trust arising from audits relevant to this component of the patient pathway.

Box 2 Neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT – responsibilities.

The neuroscience MDT is the team responsible for the diagnosis and initial management (both surgical and non-surgical aspects of care) of most adult patients with CNS tumours. Membership of this group is summarised in Box 3 and responsibilities include the following:

- To establish a diagnosis for the optimal clinical management of the patient.
- To develop management plans for patients with CNS tumours at first presentation, to include initial supportive care needs, diagnostic and surgical interventions, non-surgical oncology interventions, treatment of symptoms, and follow-up.
- Nominate and record a key worker to act as point of contact for patients and carers. This should be agreed with the patient and carer.
- To inform the diagnostic clinician / team at the local referring hospital and GP of the management plan (see communication below).
- To inform the cancer network MDT of the management plan (usually via a representative who is a member of the neuroscience MDT and also in writing).
- To review and advise on patients referred back from the cancer network MDT on disease progression or relapse.
- To develop MDT protocols, in collaboration with the cancer network MDT, to define appropriate follow-up imaging requirements for patients with CNS tumours.

- To implement the national management protocols for CNS lymphoma, medulloblastoma, pineal tumours and optic gliomas (see section on Treatment and follow-up – primary CNS lymphoma, medulloblastoma, pineal tumours and optic gliomas).
- To act as an educational resource for local service providers.
- To develop and maintain evidence-based local management protocols covering all aspects of the patient pathway.
- To participate in regular site-specific group meetings to review pathways of care and protocols.
- To introduce and maintain systems for data entry across the area of service provision including links to cancer registries.
- To audit practice at local, cancer network and supra network levels against national standards of care.
- To facilitate the entry of patients into appropriate NCRN and local clinical trials.
- Liase with the cancer network MDT.

Lead Clinician responsibilities:

- To ensure that processes are in place so that information is obtained about these patients directly from the clinician who arranged the imaging if this is not forthcoming.
- To refer onwards patients with spinal cord, pituitary or skull base tumours if inappropriately referred to this MDT

Box 3 Core membership of the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT.	
Appropriate cross cover should be available for all MDT members	
<i>Neurosurgeon(s)</i>	Specialist neurosurgeon who spends at least 50% of their clinical programmed activities in neuro-oncological surgery and are regularly involved in dedicated speciality clinics caring for these patients.
<i>Neuroradiologist(s)</i>	A consultant radiologist in a substantive post with at least 50% of clinical programmed activities spent in the practice of neuroradiology.
<i>Neuropathologist(s)</i>	An accredited pathologist who is registered as a neuropathologist or histopathologist, has specialist expertise in neuro-oncology, and takes part in the national External Quality Assurance (EQA) scheme for neuropathology organised by the British Neuropathological Society.
<i>Neurologist(s)</i>	A consultant neurologist with expertise in neuro-oncology, epilepsy or neuro-rehabilitation
<i>Oncologist(s)</i>	A clinical oncologist with a special interest in tumours of the CNS.
<i>Clinical Nurse Specialist(s)</i>	A nurse with specialist knowledge of CNS tumours and skills in communication as defined by the Manual of Cancer Services. ⁹
<i>Palliative care</i>	A healthcare professional (normally a member of the specialist palliative care team) with experience and expertise on the provision of palliative care services for CNS tumour patients.
<i>Neuropsychologist(s)</i>	A clinical neuropsychologist with a special interest in

⁹ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services. Topic 2A The generic multidisciplinary team 2A-122 to 2A-127*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

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	tumours of the CNS
<i>Specialist AHP(s)</i>	Representative(s) of the allied health professionals, including, occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, dietetics and others as appropriate who have knowledge and experience of dealing with this patient group with responsibility for education and liaison with other local specialist AHPs.
<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	An administrative post responsible for coordinating patient registration with the neuroscience MDT and data collection.
<i>Others as required (extended MDT members)</i>	Representatives from ward nursing, community palliative nursing, psychology/psychiatry, neuropsychiatry and epilepsy nurse specialists.

Box 4 The cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT – responsibilities.

The cancer network MDT is the coordinating team for the non-surgical management of most adult patients with CNS tumours. Membership of this group is summarised in Box 5 and responsibilities include the following:

- Implement the non-surgical aspects of the management plan produced by the neuroscience MDT.
- Nominate and record a key worker to act as point of contact for patients and carers. This should be agreed with the patient and carer.
- Ensure that there are systems in place for the continuous assessment of patients' and carers' needs, and provide or ensure provision of appropriate support.
- Re-refer patients to the neuroscience MDT where appropriate as defined in local protocols.
- Inform the local referring hospital and GP of the current management plans.
- Involve the local referring hospital or community services in continuing, palliative and supportive care where appropriate, providing specialist advice to local healthcare professionals when needed.
- To develop MDT protocols, in collaboration with the neuroscience MDT, to define appropriate follow-up imaging requirements for patients with CNS tumours.
- Act as an educational resource for local service providers.

- To develop and maintain evidence-based local management protocols covering all aspects of the patient pathway.
- To participate in regular site-specific group meetings to review pathways of care and protocols.
- Maintain data entry across the area of service provision.
- Audit practice against this guidance and other national guidelines as they are published.
- Facilitate the entry of patients into appropriate NCRN and local clinical trials.
- Liase with the neuroscience MDT.

Box 5 Core membership of the cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT.	
Appropriate cross cover should be available for all MDT members	
<i>Neurologist(s)</i>	A consultant neurologist with expertise in neuro-oncology, epilepsy or neuro-rehabilitation
<i>Radiologist(s)</i>	A radiologist with a specialist interest in CNS imaging.
<i>Radiographer(s)</i>	A therapy radiographer with a special interest in patients with CNS tumours who has dedicated time allocated to participate in the local MDT.
<i>Oncologist(s)</i>	A clinical oncologist with a special interest in tumours of the CNS and who is the designated neuro-oncologist for the cancer network.
<i>Clinical Nurse Specialist(s)</i>	A nurse with specialist knowledge of CNS tumours and skills in communication as defined by the Manual of Cancer Services. ¹⁰
<i>Palliative care</i>	A healthcare professional (normally a member of the specialist palliative care team) with experience and expertise on the provision of palliative care services for CNS tumour patients.
<i>Specialist AHP(s)</i>	Representative(s) of the allied health professionals, including occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, dietetics and others as appropriate who have knowledge and experience of dealing with this patient group, with responsibility for education and liaison with other local specialist AHPs, who participate in MDT meetings.

¹⁰ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services. Topic 2A The generic multidisciplinary team 2A-122 to 2A-127*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

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<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	An administrative post coordinating the MDT meeting and collecting/collating and recording appropriate information through clinicians, radiology and the neuroscience and cancer network MDTs.
<i>Others as required (extended MDT members)</i>	Representatives from ward nursing, community palliative nursing, epilepsy nurse specialist, psychology/psychiatry, neuropsychology/neuropsychiatry.

Communication between MDTs

112. Good communication is essential for the smooth and effective provision of services. Communication episodes and expected timescales are summarised as follows:

Box 6 Communication framework.	
Communication episode	Expected Timescale
The logging of patients with a possible diagnosis of CNS tumour onto neuroscience MDT data base	Within 1 week of imaging report date
The clinical summary received from the diagnosing clinician to the neuroscience MDT	Within 2 working days of the imaging report
The written summary of the management plan produced by the neuroscience MDT sent back to the referring clinician, cancer network MDT and GP	Within 1 working day of the MDT
Informing the patient or carer of diagnosis and management plan	Within 1 working day of MDT for inpatients Within 5 working days for outpatients
Referral to the supportive care services and palliative care team where appropriate	Within 1 working day of the decision
Referral to the cancer network MDT for further management	Within 2 working days of discharge from neurosurgical care
Discuss the key worker appointment and their role with patient and carers	Within 1 working day of MDT for inpatients Within 5 working days for outpatients

Referral back to the neuroscience MDT for further management	Within 1 working day of decision
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B. Anticipated benefits

- 113. The establishment of neuroscience MDTs, the appointment of a designated lead clinician at each trust and the development of clear mechanisms for review of imaging and referral of patients will increase the speed of referral and ensure that all patients are discussed at a specialist MDT, whether or not they need specialist intervention.
- 114. Having a fully staffed neuroscience MDT that meets regularly and discusses all relevant patients will improve diagnostic accuracy, as well as the speed and quality of management decisions.
- 115. Having a fully staffed cancer network MDT will ensure that the ongoing treatment, care and support for patients are properly coordinated and that the patients' needs are regularly assessed.

C. Evidence

- 116. The management of patients with CNS tumours requires a range of disciplines (see diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care sections) and the survey carried out to inform the guidance revealed that many neuroscience centres have established MDTs. Evidence for the optimal configuration of the MDT for CNS tumours, however, is limited to expert opinion and consensus based guidelines.
- 117. There is limited evidence to support MDTs for the management of patients with other types of cancer; in a review conducted for the NHS Executive *Improving outcomes in breast cancer*, multidisciplinary breast cancer teams were more likely to provide appropriate diagnosis and treatment.

D. Measurement

118. *Structure*

- Designated lead clinician.
- Neuroscience and cancer network MDTs established
- Support staff in place for every MDT.
- Rapid and effective communication systems between local hospitals and the neuroscience MDT to the time standards identified, see above.
- Establishment of internet based database for central data collection.

119. *Process*

- Numbers of neurosurgeons, neuropathologists, pituitary surgeons and neuroradiologists.
- Referral patterns for CNS tumours.
- Current information and audit of diagnosis and treatment.
- Protocols in place and whether they are agreed across the pathway.
- Relationship between different specialties involved in diagnosis and/or management of patients with CNS tumours, for example, ophthalmology.
- Staffing and configuration of existing MDTs.
- Evidence that every patient with a diagnosis of CNS tumours is registered with the neuroscience MDT.
- Evidence that a clinical summary is sent to the neuroscience MDT for all patients with a radiological diagnosis of CNS tumour.
- Audit agreed and reviewed over whole network.

120. **Outcome**

- All patients with a presumptive diagnosis of CNS tumour are reviewed by the neuroscience MDT.
- Evidence that MDTs audit treatment interventions against MDT decisions.
- Record of each member's attendance at MDT meetings.
- Record of business carried out (including patients discussed and decisions made) at MDT meetings.
- Logging of patients with imaging suspicious of brain tumour.

E. Resource implications

Neuroscience MDTs

121. Assuming that the neuroscience MDT is based in a neuroscience centre, the estimated annual employment costs, per centre, for full attendance at weekly MDT meetings is between £141,700 for a 2 hour meeting and £189,124 for a 3 hour meeting. This estimate is for all core members plus preparation time for members including lead clinicians, key workers and MDT coordinators. However, with the exception of the MDT coordinator (who attends 100% of the MDT meetings), if other MDT members only attend the minimum of 50% of the MDT meetings the annual employment cost would be between £73,840 and £97,916 for a two and three hour meeting respectively.

122. It is anticipated that for those networks without a neuroscience MDT in place, there will be an annual opportunity cost of between £73,840 for minimum attendance at weekly 2 hour neuroscience MDT meetings to £189,124 for full attendance at weekly 3 hour MDT meetings. For those networks that currently meet fortnightly, moving to weekly MDT meetings will have an estimated annual opportunity cost of between £70,850 and £94,562 for a 2 or 3 hour meeting respectively. For those networks that currently meet monthly, moving to weekly MDT meetings

will have an estimated annual opportunity cost of between £109,000 and £145,480 for a 2 or 3 hour meeting respectively.

Cancer network MDTs

123. The estimated annual employment cost for each cancer network MDT, for full attendance at monthly MDT meetings is between £12,708 for a one hour meeting and £17,532 for a two hour meeting. This estimate is for all core members plus preparation time for members including lead clinicians, key workers and MDT coordinators. However, with the exception of the MDT coordinator (who attends 100% of the MDT meetings), if other MDT members only attend the minimum of 50% of the MDT meetings the annual employment cost would be between £6,954 and £9,456 for a one and two hour meeting respectively.
124. It is assumed that there are no cancer network MDTs at present, therefore this represents an additional opportunity cost of between £6,954 per year for minimum attendance at monthly one hour MDT meetings and £17,532 per year for full attendance at monthly two hour MDT meetings for each cancer network. In practice, some networks may choose to combine MDT provision across networks, for example where neuro-oncology patients are referred into a neighbouring cancer network for treatment.

Core staffing components for brain and other CNS tumour patients at neuroscience centres

125. The annual employment costs of the core medical, nursing and other staff caring for 100 new patients per year is estimated to be around £1,744,006 (\pm 25% range, £1,308,005 to £2,180,008). The cost calculations are for the core components of the staff that will be caring for patients with CNS tumours, however it is not inclusive of all staff who would be involved with patients' care. The costs represent opportunity costs because the staff involved in the treatment centres are already contracted to the NHS.

126. There is likely to be an additional requirement for some healthcare professionals, in particular, neuropathologists, clinical nurse specialists, specialist AHPs, neuropsychologists and palliative care specialists. These are discussed in more detail in section 5 of the economic analysis report. Additional administrative staff are also required to support the functions of the MDT.

Neuropathologists

127. The increase in MDT working would increase the workload of neuropathologists. A report for the Royal College of Pathologists from the British Neuropathological Society has recommended that there should be one FTE neuropathologist per 1,000,000 patients. In order to achieve this level, a further 15 FTE posts are required across England and Wales with an estimated employment cost of around £1,474,208. There are currently seven single-handed neuropathologists in England and Wales, and these would need to be supported to ensure continual cover of the adult neuro-oncology service in these centres.

Clinical nurse specialists

128. It has been estimated that an additional 50 clinical nurse specialists will be required across England and Wales with an estimated annual employment cost of around £1,932,346.

MDT Coordinators

129. It is estimated that each neuroscience MDT will require one full time MDT coordinator and each cancer network MDT will require a 0.5 FTE MDT coordinator. The employment cost of a full time MDT coordinator is estimated to be £22,582 per annum (Agenda for Change point 16, 2005/06 payscale).

130. There will be uncertainty in our estimates reflecting variation in staffing levels and actual salaries paid to individuals. Local commissioners will

need to consider this further according to their existing patterns of work.

Key worker

131. The resource implications of each patient having a designated key worker have been included in the cost estimate for minimum core staffing levels at neuroscience centres to provide a safe and sustainable service. Further details are discussed in section 5 of the economic analysis.

Chapter 3 - Presentation and referral

132. This section primarily refers to the services for patients with primary brain tumours. This is partly because these constitute the largest proportion of patients with CNS tumours, but also because aspects of services for those with other CNS tumours are dealt with in specific sections later on in the guidance. However the organisational arrangements that are recommended will also be relevant to many patients with other CNS tumours.
133. The symptoms associated with brain tumours include headaches, seizures, changes of mental, psychological or mood states, unilateral deafness and progressive neurological deficit. All of these symptoms are common in general practice. On average, a GP may expect to see more than 30 new presentations of headache or migraine and two new presentations of seizures in a year, but only one patient with a primary brain tumour in seven years (*NICE Referral guidelines for suspected cancer*)¹¹.
134. The aim of the referral process is to ensure early access to imaging for people most likely to have brain tumours. The more disabled a patient with a brain tumour is at presentation the worse the prognosis and so early diagnosis is important. This does however pose a dilemma in that diagnostic services are limited and referrals need to be prioritised. The combination of new neurological symptoms with new neurological signs is more suggestive of pathology than symptoms alone. The combination of new neurological symptoms in any patient with a past history of cancer is suggestive of metastatic disease and needs to be referred back as a priority to the original team treating the patient.
135. The *NICE Referral guidelines for suspected cancer*¹³ make specific recommendations for the referral of patients with suspected brain or other CNS tumours. Implementation of these guidelines should help

¹¹ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2005) *Referral guidelines for suspected cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk.

professionals and agencies providing first contact care to identify those adult patients more likely to have a high-grade tumour. Such professionals and agencies include general practitioners, nurse practitioners, ophthalmic practitioners, out-of-hours services, NHS Direct and clinicians in accident and emergency departments. The advice for managing children and adolescents with these conditions has been addressed separately in the NICE guidance *Improving outcomes in children and young people with cancer*.¹²

136. It is very important that there are explicit local arrangements whereby general practitioners can access appropriate advice or diagnostic tests.
137. Many patients who are eventually diagnosed with a primary brain tumour will have been referred for investigation of problems not initially thought to be tumour-related or be admitted as an emergency with an acute neurological problem such as epilepsy and stroke. Hospital staff that care for these patients need to be aware of how they access the appropriate advice.

A. Recommendations

138. Primary care trusts / local health boards should ensure appropriate training is provided for implementation of the NICE clinical guidelines on *Referral guidelines for suspected cancer*¹³ as they apply to CNS tumours. This provision should include the new forms of primary care contact such as NHS Direct, walk-in centres, nurse practitioners and health visitors, and the use of relevant IT links. The contents of the guidelines should be incorporated into electronic decision support systems / algorithms used in such settings.
139. Cancer networks should ensure that the trust lead clinician has set up clear and well publicised mechanisms for the receipt and management / processing of GP referrals of patients with suspected primary brain

¹² National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2005). *Improving outcomes in children and young people with cancer*. London: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk.

tumours. There should be similar mechanisms for the management of internal referrals.

140. Where a brain tumour is identified on imaging requested by the general practitioner, the trust lead clinician should ensure that processes are in place for the general practitioner to be informed quickly allowing early referral through local arrangements.
141. Cancer networks should set up robust local mechanisms to ensure that every patient with imaging that suggests a diagnosis of a primary CNS tumour is discussed by the neuroscience MDT without delay (see Box 6). This is to ensure confirmation of the radiological diagnosis and advice on further management, whatever the source of the initial referral for imaging and whether or not it is thought likely that specialist treatment is needed.
142. Radiological images sent to the neuroscience MDT should be supplemented by clinical information provided either by the consultant responsible for the patient's care or by a member of the MDT who has seen the patient.

B. Anticipated benefits

143. Prompt identification of patients whose symptoms are likely to be due to a primary CNS tumour and subsequent rapid referral to a neurologist or appropriate imaging services will minimise delays in diagnosis. This will reduce the level of anxiety for patients and carers.
144. Explicit systems for managing patients with radiological imaging showing a possible primary CNS tumour should reduce the time taken to review by the neuroscience MDT and to the start of appropriate management. Overall diagnostic accuracy will also be increased.

C. Evidence

145. A review of the evidence on factors influencing delays in referral and diagnosis in the NICE guidelines *Referral guidelines for suspected cancer* showed that there was insufficient evidence to make statements

on the reasons for delay between the onset of symptoms and referral from primary to secondary care.

146. Evidence from observational and qualitative studies identified both patient / carer and physician factors that contribute to diagnostic delays.
147. The evidence confirms that early symptoms of CNS tumours mimic common and self-limiting conditions in adults.
148. There is a low volume of observational study evidence on the effect of delays in diagnosis on outcomes such as survival. One retrospective, population-based study from a UK Cancer Registry observed that in patients with CNS tumours, planning radical treatment in patients with good prognosis took longer than planning palliative treatment in patients with poor prognosis. In patients with high grade glioma, survival was significantly shorter for patients treated within a month of referral, which was attributed to the observation that patients with more urgent symptoms and poorer prognosis necessitated urgent referral and treatment.

D. Measurements

The following should be subject to regular audit.

149. **Structure**

- Evidence of a designated lead clinician in every acute trust.
- Evidence that fully staffed MDTs are established in appropriate neurosciences centres and in each cancer network.
- Local protocols for referring patients to the neuroscience and cancer network MDT, and for image and information transfer.

150. **Process**

- Staff attendance at MDT meetings.

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- Time between first presentation to the GP with possible symptoms of primary CNS tumour and referral by GP to secondary care or to neuroradiologist for imaging (GP delay).
- Time between GP referral and first image suggestive of a CNS tumour (hospital + imaging delay).
- For brain imaging, time between request and imaging procedure (by source of request) (imaging delay).
- Time between imaging and referral to the neuroscience MDT (MDT referral delay).
- Time between imaging and pathological diagnosis (surgical delay).
- Time between GP referral and first surgical treatment (i.e. first treatment e.g. steroids + biopsy or steroids + resection). (Cancer Audit Standard A [surgical]).
- Time between neuroscience MDT and appropriate feedback to referrers and to GP (neuroscience MDT communication delay).
- Time between surgery (pathological diagnosis) to start of radiotherapy (radiotherapy delay).
- Time between GP referral and first radiotherapy treatment (Cancer Audit Standard B [radiotherapy]).
- Audit of all communication targets in box 6.

151. **Outcome**

- Survival.
- Quality of life.

- Patient and carer satisfaction.

E. Resource implications

152. No resource implications were identified as a result of these recommendations.

Chapter 4 – Diagnosis: radiology and pathology

153. Establishing an accurate diagnosis to inform management decisions is a key element in the care pathway for patients with brain and other CNS tumours. This usually involves neuroradiological imaging and histopathological evaluation following biopsy or tumour resection. Other laboratory tests, such as for germ cell tumour markers, occasionally have a role in specific situations. Molecular analysis will increasingly be used alongside histopathological evaluation to characterise CNS tumours, providing information about prognosis and therapeutic response, and thereby facilitating patient stratification.
154. Timely access to the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT, defined in the MDT section, is required to discuss potential diagnoses and to ensure that patients are actively considered for the full range of investigations and treatments.
155. Neuroradiological imaging is central to the diagnostic process because this is when the diagnosis of a tumour is raised or confirmed. Radiology departments are in a unique position to identify the majority of patients with potential CNS tumours. Delays may occur because of competing demands on imaging services. Despite an increase in equipment during the past few years there is still unmet need, partly due to difficulties in funding and recruiting staff. Even if these are resolved, there will continue to be a significant number of patients who present with advanced disease as an emergency.
156. Because magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) may remain a limited resource, many patients will have computerised tomography (CT) as their primary investigation. A normal CT scan read by a neuroradiologist, or radiologist experienced in CNS imaging, should reliably exclude a tumour in the majority of cases. However, CT may miss early tumours, for example in the temporal lobes. Some patients will have an MRI scan as an initial investigation or in addition to CT at

the local hospital before referral to the neuroscience MDT. The neuroscience MDT may require an additional MRI to obtain a more definitive diagnosis, discriminate between areas of infarction and tumour, and assist in planning for surgery and radiotherapy.

157. Many other imaging techniques, including MR Spectroscopy, diffusion and perfusion imaging, single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) and positron emission tomography (PET) may help to identify foci of high-grade tumour prior to surgery and thereby improve the accuracy of histopathological evaluation. Diffusion tensor analysis and MR spectroscopy may be able to distinguish between primary and secondary tumours and may also show that the lesion is more extensive than was defined on conventional MRI.
158. These newer techniques also have the potential to identify specific biopsy sites, aid the planning of surgery, and provide additional information that will inform pre-operative discussions between surgeon and patient about prognosis, but they cannot replace neurosurgical biopsy and histopathological assessment in making the definitive diagnosis. Currently, neuroradiological imaging has a high sensitivity for identifying a brain tumour, but not for determining the type or grade of tumour, and it may be difficult to distinguish tumour from ischaemic or inflammatory lesions. Thus, histopathological classification of a CNS tumour is regarded as a pre-requisite to effective patient management. Occasionally, a diagnosis can be achieved by cytological examination of the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF).
159. Tissue for histopathology can be obtained either by biopsy or tumour resection. The decision about which surgical procedure to undertake is based on a presumptive diagnosis made on the neuroradiological imaging features. Potential procedures include: stereotactically guided biopsy, neuroradiologically guided needle biopsy, neuroradiologically guided open biopsy (usually in the form of an operation to remove the tumour), endoscopic biopsy and electrophysiologically guided resection.

160. There should be pre-operative discussion between the neurosurgeon, neuropathologist and neuroradiologist regarding the optimum approach to surgery and the processing of tissue specimens, including intraoperative histopathological evaluation.
161. Intraoperative histopathological evaluation by a specialist pathologist is particularly valuable during needle biopsy and helps to ensure that sufficient and appropriate tissue is obtained for diagnostic purposes. It can also provide information that will influence the course of the operation.
162. The neuroscience MDT meeting (see section on Presentation and Referral) provides a setting in which the histopathological findings are compared with clinical disease features and the results of neuroimaging. The participating neuropathologist might be in a position to issue a definitive diagnosis before the meeting, or to use information provided at this time to direct further tests or to inform a definitive (final) report. The final neuropathology report is regarded as the definitive distillation of information from the histopathological evaluation process informed by discussions held at the neuroscience MDT meeting. Patient management decisions should be made on the basis of the final report which should form part of the patient's record. The process for disseminating the final report should be agreed locally.
163. Recent translational research on high grade gliomas has begun to define novel molecular diagnostic tests with clinicopathological utility, such as the association between a profile of loss on chromosomes 1p and 19q and chemosensitivity among anaplastic oligodendrogliomas. Further developments in the use of molecular tests alongside histopathological assessment are to be expected in future.
164. Even with the benefit of modern histopathological techniques, precise classification of a CNS tumour is not always feasible. In such cases, management decisions are helped by discussion of the clinical,

radiological and histopathological disease features at the neuroscience MDT meeting.

A. Recommendations

165. All acute trusts should have adequate CT and MR imaging facilities so that outpatient investigations of patients with suspected CNS tumours meet cancer waiting time national targets^{14 15}.
166. An electronic image transfer system should be in place to ensure timely image transfer between the local hospital and neuroscience MDT (see section on Presentation and Referral). A function of the MDT meeting should be to determine whether or not further imaging is necessary prior to surgery.
167. When initial CT imaging is not diagnostic there should be rapid access to adequate MRI resources.
168. There should be ready access to a neurosurgical biopsy or resection service, including image localisation and stereotactic techniques. Pre-operative discussions should take place at the neuroscience MDT to determine the optimum approach to surgery and the processing of tissue specimens, including intra-operative histological evaluation.
169. Neuropathology and neuroradiology services should be provided to a level that ensures practitioners in these specialties can provide appropriate diagnostic investigations in a timely and efficient manner complying with national cancer waiting times targets, can be involved in pre- and post-operative management decisions and intra-operative diagnosis, and neuropathologists can report to the standards detailed

¹⁴ Department of Health (2000) *The NHS plan*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

¹⁵ Welsh Assembly Government (2005) *Welsh health circular 2005 (027). Monthly data collection of cancer waiting times to start of definitive treatment*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government. Available from: www.wales.nhs.uk

in the document *Minimum Datasets for CNS Tumours* (Royal College of Pathologists).¹⁶

170. Molecular diagnostic tests will become increasingly important as supplementary investigations to the neuropathological assessment of CNS tumours, informing diagnosis, prognosis and therapeutic decisions. The evaluation, development and implementation of these tests should be supported.
171. There is a need for improved biological research into CNS tumours, and tumour biopsy material, when processed optimally at the time of operation, should be stored for future scientific research with appropriate consent, as well as for diagnostic purposes.

B. Anticipated benefits

172. Better access to modern diagnostic radiological, neuropathological and neurosurgical services for CNS tumour patients will improve the speed and accuracy of diagnosis.
173. Improvements in the nature and scope of radiological, neuropathological and molecular diagnostic tests will result in better informed clinical management decisions and the ability to offer patients, and their relatives, clearer information about the specific diagnosis and prognosis.

C. Evidence

174. There is consistent evidence that MRI is more sensitive than CT in the detection of CNS tumours and gives better definition of tumour extent. Observational studies suggest the specificity of MRI for tumour histology is not sufficient to allow it to replace biopsy.
175. Individual case series highlight the potential usefulness of new diagnostic imaging technologies, such as MR spectroscopy, diffusion

¹⁶ The Royal College of Pathologists (2004) *Minimum dataset for the histopathological reporting of tumours of the central nervous system*. London: The Royal College of Pathologists. Available from: www.rcpath.org

and perfusion imaging, SPECT and PET in the management of CNS tumours. Meta-analysis of such studies, however, is problematic due to small sample sizes, non-standardised techniques and differences in study populations.

176. Two evidence-based technology appraisals of MR spectroscopy for the evaluation of brain tumours reported that there was insufficient high quality evidence to conclude that MR spectroscopy could replace biopsy in the diagnosis of brain tumours.
177. There is consensus supporting the usefulness of PET in distinguishing between brain tumour and radiation necrosis. An evidence-based technology appraisal estimated the sensitivity of PET in this context as between 76% to 83%, with specificity from 50% to 62%. The review also estimated the sensitivity of PET for distinguishing high grade from low grade gliomas, as ranging from 69% to 100%, with specificity from 57% to 100%. In the absence of studies directly comparing the accuracy of PET with conventional MR for distinguishing low and high grade gliomas, however, it is difficult to estimate whether the addition of PET would improve the pre-operative evaluation of tumour grade.
178. There is a lack of prospective research designed to compare biopsy techniques; with evidence limited to case series describing the morbidity and mortality associated with biopsy. These studies suggest that the risks for additional permanent morbidity from stereotactic or image directed biopsy are about 4%, with a less than 0.4% risk of death. These figures relate to centres carrying out large numbers of biopsies, however, where more difficult cases may be referred.
179. Two systematic reviews have compared the outcomes of adults with high grade gliomas following surgical resection or biopsy. Both were unable to draw firm conclusions, as only one small randomised controlled trial was identified. Observational case series report improved median survival in patients undergoing resection; these

studies are prone to selection bias, however, as patients with better prognosis are more likely to undergo resection.

180. Consistent evidence supports the usefulness of intraoperative neuropathology to confirm the adequacy of biopsy specimens. A UK case series described how the diagnostic rate for stereotactic CT-guided biopsy of intracranial lesions was improved from 87% to 94% by the introduction of intraoperative cytopathology. Two UK audits both showed increased diagnostic yield following stereotactic biopsy if an intra-operative histological procedure was done to confirm that sufficient tissue had been obtained for diagnostic purposes.
181. Four observational studies examined the accuracy of the intraoperative histopathological and cytopathological diagnosis of CNS tumours. Agreement between intraoperative diagnosis based on frozen sections and the definitive diagnosis was seen in between 87 and 90% of cases. When intraoperative diagnosis was based on both histopathological and cytopathological techniques, accuracy was slightly higher, with 91 to 94% concordance.
182. Observational studies suggest that characteristic cytogenetic changes in anaplastic oligodendrogliomas are predictive of chemosensitivity and prognosis, and useful in differential diagnosis. A recent trial identified a potential role for molecular diagnostic testing in predicting the response of patients with glioblastoma to temozolomide.

D. Measurement

183. Structure

- Access to appropriate imaging equipment (both radiological and pathological) for neuroscience MDTs.
- Sessional time for neuroradiologists, neuropathologists to attend neuroscience MDT meetings.

- Provision of adequate resources and staff or demonstrable contingency plans to cope with the estimated demand for biopsy and resectional surgery to reduce the risk of cancellation and waiting times for diagnostic / therapeutic surgery to recommended levels.

184. Process

Audit of:

- waiting times for neuroimaging and biopsy / resection
- proportion of patients with potential CNS tumours identified to the MDT meeting via a referral from the responsible clinician
- percentage of patients being identified to the MDT meeting by review of the imaging reports that identify a potential tumour
- frequency of obtaining a definitive histopathological diagnosis
- turnaround times for neuropathology reports
- number of patients with advanced disease presenting as emergencies.

185. Outcome

- Morbidity and mortality associated with biopsy procedures.
- Patient and carer satisfaction.

E. Resource implications

186. It is anticipated that there are sufficient imaging facilities at neuroscience centres. However not all of these facilities have sufficient staffing. It is estimated that each MRI scanner requires minimum staffing provision of 1.3 FTE consultant neuroradiologists, 3.0 FTE neuroradiographers plus additional administrative support. The annual employment costs for this level of staffing per MRI scanner are estimated to be £268,071. Local commissioners will need to investigate current staffing levels and increase staffing where necessary.

187. Systems to enhance electronic data transfer are being implemented in England and Wales as a result of the National Programme for Information Technology in England and Informing Healthcare in Wales. This will take some time to be fully implemented. Cost estimates for electronic transfer of data have been included for those networks with inadequate provision. The estimated cost for high quality electronic transfer of data and images, including videoconferencing capability, are around £15,000 (£18,000 inclusive of VAT and delivery) per centre inclusive of installation, software and a three year maintenance contract.
188. Molecular diagnosis is a fast developing area of clinical practice, and commissioners will need to plan for expansion in the next 10-20 years. At present, existing services for molecular diagnosis are adequate for the numbers of patients who require testing. However if the MGMT assay is introduced, then it is anticipated that an additional biomedical scientist per testing laboratory would be needed. The current annual employment cost of a grade 2 biomedical scientist is around £26,103. The total number of extra staff across the UK would probably be 30 at maximum. There would be an additional cost of around £500,000 for consumables for the estimated 2500 tests that would be expected to be required across England and Wales. The total additional annual cost for 2,500 MGMT tests including consumables for the tests and staffing to perform them is estimated at £1,283,090.
189. Local commissioners will need to monitor the situation and if two more similar molecular tests were to be adopted for CNS tumours over a period of ten years, then the total costs may double. However, it is not possible to predict the implications of this recommendation; it will be for commissioners to consider in line with local requirements.
190. It has been estimated that an additional 15 FTE neuropathologists will be required across England and Wales with an estimated annual

employment cost of around £1,474,208, as described in the resource implications of chapter 2 - multidisciplinary teams.

Chapter 5 - Treatment and follow-up: brain tumours

191. This section covers healthcare services for the more common brain tumours:
192. Low grade gliomas
193. High grade gliomas
194. Meningiomas
195. Metastases

Treatment

196. There is a wide variety of treatments available for these tumours. Choice between the various options crucially depends on the diagnosis made, either by histopathological evaluation of specimens from biopsy or resection, or by review of the radiological imaging.

Low grade glioma (WHO grade I and 2)

197. The natural history of low grade glioma (LGG) and neuronally based tumours is variable, and the histopathological characteristics of the tumour are the most important determinant of outcome. Imaging is not reliable for determining the grade of a glioma and up to 40% of LGG diagnosed on imaging are found to have high grade features on histopathological evaluation of biopsy material. All patients need to have a confirmed histopathological diagnosis unless the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT decides that performing a biopsy would be too high a risk for the patient or is otherwise inappropriate.
198. Local protocols agreed by the neuroscience and cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDTs are required to define those patients managed by watchful waiting or early surgical intervention. The EORTC criteria (Appendix 2.2) will help identify those at increased risk of rapid deterioration who may benefit from early intervention. Similarly

local protocols that define those patients requiring radiotherapy should be in place.

199. The exact role of chemotherapy is uncertain and the research evidence is not strong and the results of recent trials are awaited.
200. Follow-up imaging requirements should be decided by the neuroscience MDT in collaboration with the cancer network MDT and defined by MDT protocol.

High grade glioma (WHO grade 3 and 4)

201. High grade glioma (HGG) includes glioblastoma, anaplastic astrocytomas and anaplastic oligodendrogliomas. These are usually associated with a poor prognosis, although some patients with anaplastic oligodendrogliomas and anaplastic astrocytomas may have a better outcome than others. Among the important prognostic factors are age, performance status and co-morbidity, tumour type and grade and presence or absence of seizures

Initial treatment

202. The main aims of treatment and follow-up are to increase survival while maximising the patients' functional capability and quality of life, and to ensure ready and timely access to appropriate supportive care for patients and carers.
203. The first management decision is to identify whether the patient
 - needs urgent surgical intervention (for example, emergency decompression or shunt insertion for hydrocephalus)
 - needs elective surgery to decide the management plan within protocols and guidelines agreed by the MDT
 - is fit for any intervention.

204. The current waiting time targets (in both Wales and England) from GP referral to first definitive treatment is two months, and from diagnosis ('the definition to treat date') to first definitive treatment is one month¹⁷¹⁸. It is important to emphasise that these targets also apply to patients with CNS tumours, although there may be some patients with rapidly growing tumours and/or worsening symptoms who will need treatment much more quickly.
205. There are some patients in whom tumour growth is very rapid. They may deteriorate very quickly with or without surgical intervention.
206. Radical radiotherapy may be considered following confirmed histopathological diagnosis. In exceptional circumstances where the neuroscience MDT considers that any surgical intervention would put the patient at an unacceptable risk, radical radiotherapy may be given in the absence of histology.
207. Adjuvant chemotherapy has been shown to have a small but significant survival advantage and may be considered in some patients after careful discussion according to local protocol.
208. The use of carmustine wafers in combination with surgical resection and of adjuvant post-operative temozolamide in patients with newly diagnosed high grade glioma, is the subject of an ongoing NICE technology appraisal which is due for publication in August 2007 (Carmustine implants and temozolomide for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=appraisals.inprogress>).
209. High grade gliomas encompass the brain tumours for which novel molecular diagnostic tests have clinicopathological utility. The development of molecular tests for these and future biological markers

¹⁷ Department of Health (2000) *The NHS plan*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

¹⁸ Welsh Assembly Government (2005) *Welsh health circular 2005 (027). Monthly data collection of cancer waiting times to start of definitive treatment*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government. Available from: www.wales.nhs.uk

that can be used alongside histopathological evaluation has resource implications.

210. New service developments would require additional resources.

Treatment at relapse

211. Treatment with chemotherapy may be considered in some patients. NICE guidance¹⁹ recommends that nitrosourea-based chemotherapy be considered following first relapse of HGG in patients who have had surgery and radiotherapy. Temozolomide may then be considered following failure of nitrosourea-based chemotherapy. This guidance is scheduled for update in 2007 (Carmustine implants and temozolomide for the treatment of recurrent high grade glioma <http://www.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=appraisals.inprogress>).

Implantable intra-tumoural chemotherapy may be useful in some patients at the time of first surgery or at relapse and are both subjects of NICE health technology appraisals. Implementation of these technology appraisal recommendations should result in increased patient survival and hence an increased demand for supportive care resources, drug monitoring (temozolomide) and pharmacy costs (carmustine implants). Survival is very poor in elderly, frail patients with co-morbidities. They tolerate active intervention poorly and are generally managed with corticosteroids and supportive care only. The role of newer chemotherapies remain uncertain and need to be the subject of clinical trials.

Meningioma

212. Meningiomas are tumours arising from the meninges. They most commonly arise in the skull vault and are usually low grade (WHO grade 1) with an indolent course. The commonest presenting symptom

¹⁹ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2001) *Guidance on the use of temozolomide for the treatment of recurrent malignant glioma (brain cancer)*. Technology Appraisal Guidance No.23. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

is with focal or generalised epilepsy. The wider use of CNS imaging has led to an increase in the incidental discovery of meningiomas.

213. Management depends on signs, symptoms, the patient's fitness, the tumour site and size. Small, incidental meningiomas can be safely managed conservatively although there is a lack of consensus as to the optimum follow-up periods. Skull base meningiomas are considered in the section on treatment and follow-up – pituitary, spinal cord and skull base tumours.
214. Resection may be appropriate for patients with skull vault meningiomas. It can prevent further disease progression and the associated deterioration in neurological function although recurrence may occur.
215. Radiotherapy may be considered following histopathological confirmation of the diagnosis in patients with the following features:
 - a WHO histopathological grade 2/3 tumour
 - invasion by tumour of adjacent brain or extensive invasion of other tissues
 - a second or subsequent relapse
 - a contraindication to surgery
216. Stereotactic radiotherapy and radiosurgery may be useful in selected patients although the value of these approaches is still uncertain.
217. There is no clearly established role for chemotherapy, hormonal therapy and radiolabelled treatments in the management of these patients.

Metastases

218. Metastases in the brain occur in 20-40% of patients with other primary cancers. Brain metastases are usually associated with a poor prognosis.
219. The great majority of patients require appropriate palliative management which may include radiotherapy, chemotherapy or hormone therapy depending on the site of the primary tumour. There are however a small group of patients who require consideration by a specialist neuro-oncology team:
- those presenting with cerebral metastases as the first sign of malignant disease where surgery is required to clarify the diagnosis
 - where imaging findings are in doubt following neuroradiological assessment
 - those presenting with solitary metastases, who are otherwise fit, with a prognosis that warrants considering neurosurgical intervention.
220. Complete surgical excision should be considered in patients with single metastases where the risk of unacceptable complications is low.
221. Post operative radiotherapy following the resection of solitary metastases may reduce the likelihood of intracranial relapse in appropriately selected patients.
222. Stereotactic radiotherapy can be considered as an alternative to surgery in small lesions (<3 cm) when the histopathological diagnosis is known. Occasionally it may be considered in patients with more than one lesion. The role of further treatment with radiotherapy to the brain following stereotactic radiotherapy is uncertain although may prevent intracranial relapse.

Follow-up

223. There are difficulties in defining the most appropriate methods and frequency of follow-up patients with brain tumours. The follow up required varies between tumour types and will involve a combined approach to symptom management and disease surveillance. The main reasons for clinical assessment and imaging follow-up are to:

- manage any continuing problems, such as epilepsy, resulting from the disease or initial treatment
- diagnose recurrence when symptoms change and refer for appropriate management
- provide access to appropriate information, support and rehabilitation
- provide symptomatic and palliative care
- provide information to patients on new treatments and opportunities to participate in research studies.

224. Imaging is an integral part of follow-up for patients with brain tumours. There is uncertainty about the value and frequency of follow-up imaging. Ideally it should be reserved for patients in whom the result of the scan is going to alter management. The frequency of scans should then be determined by the MDT. The role of the newer imaging techniques such as PET and SPECT is uncertain.

225. In the case of slow growing low grade glioma patients and benign meningioma patients, locally agreed protocols for follow-up need to be in place. It is important to identify a key worker (see section on MDTs) who is the main point of contact for the GP, patients and carers.

A. Recommendations

226. The neuroscience MDT should ensure that there are explicit and widely known mechanisms for the urgent management of patients developing acute problems that might require neurosurgical intervention.

227. The neuroscience MDT (Boxes 2 and 3) should be adequately resourced to ensure that all patients start their definitive treatment without delay.
228. Members of the neuroscience MDT are responsible for implementing the surgical aspects of the management plan and adjuvant therapy based on neuropathological diagnosis. All other care including chemotherapy, radiotherapy and coordination of supportive care is the responsibility of the cancer network MDT (Boxes 4 and 5).
229. The cancer network MDT and the neuroscience MDT should develop locally agreed guidelines for follow-up. There should be robust mechanisms in place to ensure that GPs and community palliative care teams are able to communicate efficiently with the specialist teams as the need arises. Patients and carers should be given clear information as to how and whom to contact if they are concerned about their condition.
230. After initial treatment, patients should have follow-up as close to home as possible by a member of either the neuroscience MDT or cancer network MDT in a multidisciplinary outpatient clinic setting.
231. Patients should have ready access to specialist neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry for assessment and management of complex cognitive, emotional and behavioural problems, and to specialist healthcare professionals as appropriate for any other problems they may experience such as epilepsy, headaches, functional loss, speech and language problems, swallowing or visual problems.
232. The neuroscience MDT should advise on the management of patients presenting with brain metastases where biopsy is required to clarify the diagnosis, where there is doubt about the imaging findings following neuroradiological assessment or where neurosurgical intervention is considered appropriate.

233. Stereotactic radiotherapy should be available as an alternative to surgery in patients with a single, or occasionally two, small metastases (<3 cm) when the histopathological diagnosis is known.
234. Novel treatments currently under evaluation should not generally be used outside the context of a clinical trial/research setting.

B. Anticipated benefits

235. Patients will have faster access to the most appropriate specialist care, whatever the diagnosis. They will also have better access to trained health professionals for support, rehabilitation and management of specific problems such as epilepsy.
236. Follow-up will be provided in the most appropriate place, balancing the needs for geographical convenience and specialist expertise.

C. Evidence

Low grade gliomas (LGG)

237. The data supporting the recommendations for surgery are lacking and constitute expert opinion based on retrospective studies, however there is an association between extent of resection (where this can be done safely) and prolonged survival. There is observational evidence that radiotherapy improves survival in LGG. There is a single RCT indicating that early radiotherapy delays local relapse compared with radiotherapy at clinical or radiological progression, but does not extend survival. Early radiotherapy is associated with a higher risk of late radiation damage compared with delayed radiation therapy.

High grade gliomas (HGG)

238. The data supporting the recommendations for surgery are lacking and constitute expert opinion-based or retrospective studies and one underpowered randomised study, however there is an association between extent of resection (where this can be done safely) and prolonged survival.

239. Radiotherapy has been shown to prolong survival in patients with HGG in four randomised, controlled trials and one well conducted systematic review.
240. In radiotherapy for patients with high grade glioma, evidence to support the use of a focal margin to spare as much normal brain tissue as possible, is provided by one randomised controlled trial. This study compared whole brain radiotherapy with low dose brain radiotherapy plus a boost local to the tumour and found no significant survival difference between groups.
241. Dose escalation beyond 60 Gy has not been shown to be beneficial and neither brachytherapy nor stereotactic boost, have been shown to confer benefit. A well conducted systematic review found that seven of eight randomised studies of hyperfractionated versus conventionally fractionated radiotherapy demonstrated no significant survival benefit of hyperfractionated radiotherapy.
242. Chemotherapy in an adjuvant setting has been the subject of a recent, high quality meta-analysis that has demonstrated a 2 month median survival advantage for chemotherapy plus radiotherapy compared with radiotherapy alone (hazard ratio of 0.85; 95% CI 0.78-0.91; $p=0.00004$) and a 5% increase in 2 year survivors.
243. A recent, well conducted, randomised, controlled trial demonstrated benefit from concurrent and adjuvant chemotherapy with temozolomide and radiotherapy, compared with radiotherapy alone, in improving median survival by 2.5 months (hazard ratio of 0.63; 95%CI 0.52-0.75; $p<0.001$) and a 16% increase in patients surviving at 2 years.
244. Local chemotherapy using implanted wafers has been studied in a randomised, controlled trial, which demonstrated a median 2.3 month survival benefit following polymer slow release chemotherapy, compared with placebo, for patients with newly diagnosed or relapsed glioblastoma.

245. The effect of carmustine wafers and temozolomide on newly diagnosed high grade glioma was the subject of NICE technology appraisal number 23 published in 2001²⁰. This guideline will be updated in 2007. The effect of both treatments on newly diagnosed high grade glioma is the subject of an ongoing NICE health technology appraisal which is due for publication in August 2006²¹.
246. There are numerous case reports of palliative chemotherapy although the optimum regime is not yet established.
247. Anaplastic oligodendrogliomas are more frequently responsive to chemotherapy than astrocytomas. Observational study evidence suggests that in patients with oligodendroglioma, demonstration of chromosome 1p / 19q loss of heterozygosity not only predicts response to chemotherapy, but also survival.

Meningiomas

248. No randomised controlled trials to guide the management of these tumours were identified. Evidence from case series describes the population, and can be used to suggest a safe population for watch and wait and to indicate the safety of surgery.
249. The role of radiotherapy has been explored in a number of case series but none are randomised or have sufficient follow-up to draw conclusions.

Metastases

250. A systematic review and an evidence-based guideline compared surgical resection and whole brain radiotherapy (WBRT) to WBRT alone in selected patients with a single brain metastasis. No significant difference in overall survival was noted in a meta-analysis of three

²⁰ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2001) *Temozolomide for the treatment of recurrent malignant glioma (brain cancer)*. Technology appraisal guidance 23. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

²¹ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (forthcoming in 2006) *Carmustine implants and temozolomide for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma*

RCTs. Improved functionally independent survival was seen in patients receiving surgical resection and WBRT in the single RCT that included this outcome.

251. One of the reviews considered the issue of stereotactic biopsy of presumed solitary brain metastases before initiation of treatment and identified two primary studies. In one study of patients with a known systemic malignancy and a CT scan reported as being consistent with a single brain metastasis, 11% of cases were diagnosed as either primary brain tumours or non-neoplastic lesions following biopsy. The authors concluded that all patients should undergo biopsy. A second study, however, reported the rate of MRI misdiagnosis in patients undergoing surgical resection of presumed solitary brain metastases as 2%.
252. An RCT comparing WBRT plus stereotactic radiosurgery boost with WBRT alone in patients with one to three brain metastases, found no significant difference in the median overall survival or performance status of the two treatment groups. In patients with a single metastasis however, a stereotactic radiosurgery boost was associated with improved median overall survival on univariate analysis, and this benefit approached significance on multivariate analysis.
253. Evidence comparing surgical resection with stereotactic radiosurgery for patients with a solitary brain metastasis was limited to a retrospective case series. The study did not observe an overall survival difference between the treatment groups, but noted improved local control in patients treated using stereotactic radiosurgery.
254. It remains uncertain whether WBRT is really necessary after resection of a single brain metastasis. While this may reduce likelihood of further brain metastases, it may also be associated with radiation related CNS toxicity.
255. An evidence-based guideline comparing WBRT with supportive care alone in patients with multiple brain metastases identified a single RCT.

Median survival was 14 weeks in the WBRT compared to 10 weeks in the supportive care group (p value not stated) with similar improvements in performance status seen in both groups. Patients in both groups received oral corticosteroids.

Hospital case volume and patient outcome

256. Consistent observational evidence suggests a positive relationship between hospital case volume and perioperative outcome following neurosurgery. A large population-based American study noted postoperative mortality following craniotomy for CNS tumour resection was significantly lower in high case volume hospitals, and for high case volume surgeons. Similar findings were reported in a study of mortality in patients undergoing craniotomy for tumour in 33 American acute care hospitals and in a population-based study of craniotomy for the resection of metastatic brain tumours. A positive case volume and patient outcome relationship was reported in a study of mortality and morbidity following surgical removal of primary brain tumours in a Russian study, although case mix adjustment was not made in this study. Two American studies reported that perioperative mortality after surgery for cerebral aneurysm was significantly lower in higher volume hospitals and for higher volume surgeons.
257. Evidence reviewed, for example in NICE guidelines *Improving outcomes in colorectal cancer*, suggests that for complex or high risk cancer surgery outcomes are better in higher volume hospitals.

Place of care

258. A report by Northern and Yorkshire Cancer Registry compared the survival of patients with CNS tumours (HGG, LGG or meningioma) treated at 3 specialist neuroscience centres with those managed elsewhere, in the period 1986 to 1994. Although in a simple comparison survival was better for those treated in neuroscience centres, patients with very poor prognosis tended not to be referred for neurosurgery. When patient age and treatment factors were adjusted

for there was no significant difference in survival between those referred to the neuroscience centres and those treated elsewhere.

259. The Glioma Outcomes Project examined patterns of care and survival in 565 American patients with high grade glioma. In a case mix adjusted analysis, patients treated in academic institutions did not have improved survival compared to those treated elsewhere. In a univariate comparison, survival was better for those treated in academic centres and the authors concluded that the survival difference reflected the increased use of chemotherapy, radiotherapy at academic centres and the younger age of patients referred to such institutions.

Sub-specialisation in neurosurgery

260. A Scottish observational study compared the survival of a series of 168 patients with high grade glioma treated by a specialist surgical neuro-oncologist with 68 treated by non-specialist neurosurgeons. No survival difference was seen in a case mix adjusted comparison.
261. A small retrospective audit of surgery for intracranial aneurysm in a UK neurosurgery department noted that there was less morbidity and mortality and better patient performance status after neurovascular sub-specialisation was established in the unit.
262. An American observational study analysed the correlation between neurosurgical subspecialisation and outcome using data from three clinical trials which included 485 children with medulloblastomas / primitive neuro-ectodermal tumours (PNET) and 247 children with high grade gliomas. Paediatric neurosurgeons were more likely than general neurosurgeons to resect more than 90% of the tumour. No difference in the complication rates of the paediatric and general neurosurgeons was observed, and survival data were not reported.
263. Evidence for neurosurgical sub-specialisation in the treatment of pituitary and skull base tumours is presented in the next section.

D. Measurement

264. **Structure**

- Evidence for the establishment of adequately resourced MDTs.
- Provision of staff and resources to provide an adequate neurosurgical service, including emergency procedures.
- Access to stereotactic radiotherapy equipment.

265. **Process**

- Time intervals from diagnosis to start of definitive treatment, (31 days) especially for HGG patients, in whom the total time from GP referral to definitive treatment should be well within the 62 day target.
- Number of operations carried out per annum by specialist neurosurgeons and number of new referrals for treatment by clinical oncologists.
- The proportions of patients having surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.
- Entry of patients into clinical trials.
- Delays to start of radiotherapy.
- Follow-up imaging.

266. **Outcome**

- Neurosurgical complication rates.
- One and five year survival rates.
- Quality of life for patients.
- Patient and carer satisfaction.

E. Resource implications

267. The resource implications of the neuroscience MDT and cancer network MDT are presented in chapter 2 - multidisciplinary teams. Additional costs will be incurred in some neuroscience centres where the recommended minimum staffing levels to provide a safe and sustainable service are not met. Further details are included in section 5 of the economic analysis report.

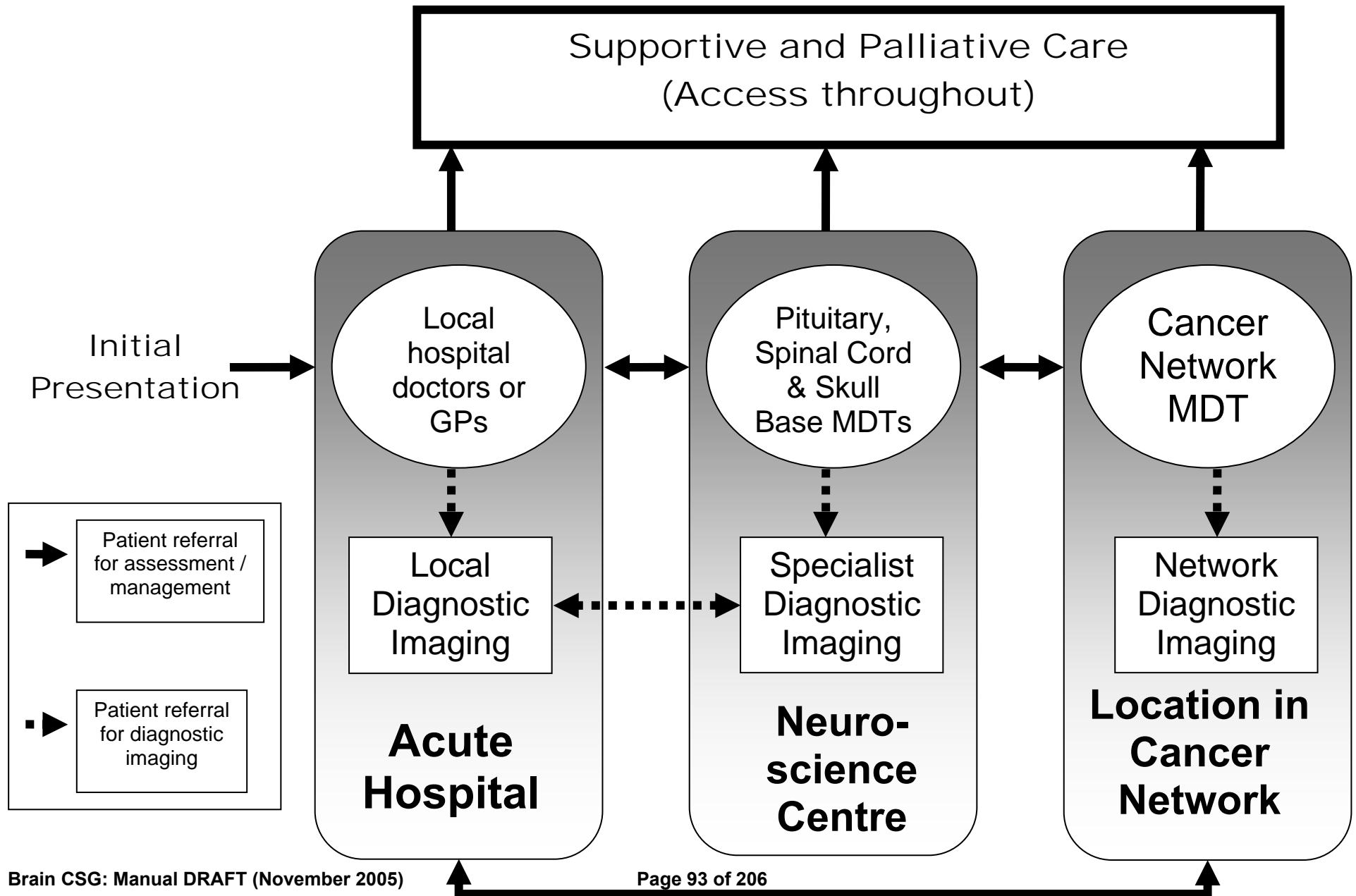
Chapter 6 -Treatment and follow-up: pituitary, spinal cord and skull base tumours

268. This section covers the care of those patients with brain and other CNS tumours that would benefit from the advice and management of specialist MDTs (different from the neurosciences brain and other CNS tumours MDT as defined in the MDT section). These include pituitary, spinal and skull base tumours. These MDTs are defined by the specialist expertise required to manage the patients and will be detailed in the individual sections that follow.
269. These patients present in a variety of ways and, as with other CNS tumour patients, the diagnosis will normally first be indicated by imaging. The designated lead in every trust (see Box 1) will be responsible for ensuring clear pathways are in place to refer patients directly to the appropriate specialist MDT for these patients.
270. There is current controversy regarding the manpower requirements for many pituitary tumours. Work is currently underway at a national level to help define this. The service configuration will depend on local circumstances and in some cases there will be overlap in the membership between the pituitary MDT and the neurosciences MDT. However all patients should benefit from assessment by the specialist membership of the pituitary MDT.
271. For spinal and skull base tumours the specialist teams are likely to relate to more than one neuroscience centre. This will be determined by the access to specialist healthcare professionals and services. There will need to be clear pathways of referral to these very specialist teams.
272. The general responsibilities of these specialist MDTs are described in Box 7.
273. For all patients with pituitary, spinal and skull base tumours the cancer network MDT will be the focus of non-surgical treatment and follow-up

unless there are particular treatments and techniques that require a specialist referral. These pathways will need to be defined by protocol determined by the specialist MDT.

274. Fundamental to ensuring efficient clinical care when patients are managed by different teams on different sites is good communication. Figure 5 summarises the flow of information through the patient pathway.

Figure 5: Brain and Other CNS Tumours Patient Pathway



A. Recommendations - general

275. Patients with pituitary, spinal or skull base tumours should have their management plan decided by a dedicated specialist MDT.
276. The relationship between these specialist MDTs and the neurosciences MDT should be clearly defined by local protocols.
277. All patients should have specialist follow-up as defined by the relevant MDT.

Box 7 Pituitary, spinal and skull base MDTs – responsibilities

The pituitary, spinal and skull base MDTs are the teams responsible for the diagnosis and initial management plan (both surgical and non-surgical aspects of care) of most adult patients with these tumours. Membership of these is summarised in boxes 8, 9 and 10 and responsibilities include the following:

- To establish as complete a diagnosis as possible for the optimal clinical management of the patient.
- To develop management plans at first presentation, to include initial supportive care needs, diagnostic and surgical interventions, non-surgical oncology interventions, treatment of symptoms and follow-up.
- To inform the diagnostic clinician/team at the local referring hospital of the management plan.
- To inform the cancer network MDT of the management plan.
- To review and advise on patients referred back for disease progression or relapse.
- To develop MDT protocols, in collaboration with the neuroscience MDT and the cancer network MDTs, to define appropriate follow-up imaging

requirements for patients.

- To act as an educational resource for local service providers.
- To organise regular site-specific group meetings to review pathways of care and protocols.
- Nominate and record a key worker to act as point of contact for patients and carers. This should be agreed with the patient and carer.
- To develop and maintain evidence-based local management protocols covering all aspects of the patient pathway.
- To introduce and maintain systems for data entry across the area of service provision including links to cancer registries.
- To audit practice at local, cancer network and supra network levels against national standards of care.
- To facilitate the entry of patients into appropriate NCRN and local clinical trials.
- Liase with the cancer network MDT.

Pituitary and pituitary related tumours

278. The majority of pituitary tumours (95%) are adenomas. The remainder include craniopharyngiomas, Rathke's cleft cysts and meningiomas as these involve similar clinical problems, surgical management and personnel.
279. The initial diagnosis may be suspected or confirmed by neurologists, physicians, ophthalmologists or gynaecologists who then have no further involvement in patients' management. Patients usually present with headache, visual disturbance, endocrine dysfunction or by the incidental identification in a CT scan in patients who are asymptomatic.
280. The following principles of care apply:
- Patients with pituitary tumours may require prolonged periods in the care of an endocrinologist who specialises in pituitary dysfunction.
 - All patients will benefit at presentation from specialist multidisciplinary team (Box 8) discussion to formulate a management plan.
 - MRI is the preferred investigation for patients with potential pituitary or parasellar tumours. In patients with Cushing's syndrome, specialist interventional radiology experience may be needed.
 - The majority of patients require surgery. This is usually carried out by either an ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgeon or neurosurgeon.
 - The surgical workload for these tumours will decrease in the next few years as new endocrinological treatments become available.
 - Histopathological assessment of these tumours requires particular expertise and access to electron microscopy and possibly a second opinion from specialists nationwide.
 - Post operative radiotherapy may be required.

- Radiosurgery techniques may help in the management of patients with residual tumours. Otherwise, radiosurgery should be the subject of research studies.
- The follow-up of patients who have been treated for pituitary tumours may require the following:
 - regular assessment by an endocrinologist
 - regular assessment of the visual fields by perimetry with access to a neuro-ophthalmologist as clinically indicated
 - MRI imaging.
- Most patients with pituitary tumours will not need palliative and supportive care, although there should be ready access to these services when required.

A. Recommendations – Pituitary

281. Patients should be followed up by a member of the specialist pituitary MDT at a multidisciplinary clinic. More local follow-up based on protocols may be arranged in conjunction with the specialist pituitary MDT or the cancer network MDT and the relevant endocrinology team.
282. Specialist histopathological assessment should be available, as should mechanisms for ready access to second opinion.

Box 8 Core membership of the pituitary MDT	
Appropriate cross cover should be available for all MDT members	
<i>Specialist pituitary surgeon</i>	A neurosurgeon or ENT surgeon with appropriate training who works in close association with the specialist endocrinologist and has specialist pituitary surgical responsibility for at least 50% of their programmed clinical activities.
<i>Endocrinologist</i>	An endocrinologist with a special interest in tumours of the pituitary gland and appropriate expertise in the diagnosis and management of pituitary dysfunction.
<i>Neuroradiologist(s)</i>	A consultant radiologist in a substantive post with at least 50% of clinical programmed activity spent in the practice of neuroradiology.
<i>Neuropathologist(s)</i>	An accredited pathologist who is registered as a neuropathologist or histopathologist, has specialist expertise in the pathology of tumours in the region of the pituitary gland, and takes part in the national External Quality Assurance (EQA) scheme for neuropathology organised by the British Neuropathological Society or an equivalent EQA scheme for endocrine pathology.
<i>Clinical oncologist</i>	A consultant clinical oncologist with

	specialist expertise in the management and irradiation of tumours of the sellar region.
<i>Clinical Nurse Specialist</i>	A nurse with expertise and experience in neurology/neurosurgery and/or endocrinology working in close association with the specialist endocrinologist as defined by the Manual of Cancer Standards ²² .
<i>Specialist AHP(s)</i>	Representative(s) of the allied health professionals, including, prosthetist, speech and language therapy, dietetics and others as appropriate who have knowledge and experience of dealing with this patient group.
<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	An administrative post responsible for coordinating patient registration with the neuroscience MDT and data collection.
<i>Others as required (extended MDT members)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consultant ophthalmologist with expertise in the management of patients with visual disturbance associated with a CNS tumour.

²² Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

Intradural spinal cord tumours

283. There is a wide variety of primary spinal column tumours and all are relatively rare. Intradural tumours may be within the spinal cord (intramedullary; 5% of spinal column tumours) or outside the cord (extramedullary; 15% of spinal column tumours) or occasionally both. The majority of spinal intradural lesions are slow growing and clinical presentation may be protracted. Rapid deterioration may occasionally occur in patients with glial tumours. The prognosis for high-grade tumour types is nearly always poor with an average life expectancy of between 6 and 12 months.

284. The following principles of care apply:

- All patients will benefit at presentation from specialist multidisciplinary team (Box 9) discussion to formulate a management plan.
- Imaging with MRI is used to investigate these tumours. Spinal angiography may be necessary for a few patients.
- In patients with low-grade tumours the main aim of treatment, usually surgical, is to prevent further neurological deterioration.
- Patients need to be managed by teams treating other spinal disease that may require surgical management (for example disc prolapse), including emergency services for patients with suspected spinal cord compression.
- There needs to be a single point of referral into the on-call spinal team for both imaging and specialist referral.
- The majority of intradural tumours can be completely excised. The excision of intramedullary glial tumours risks further damage to the spinal cord and survival is not improved if the lesion is high-grade. The intraoperative pathological evaluation of biopsy material is therefore

essential to ensure that further excision of a high-grade lesion, for example an invasive anaplastic astrocytoma, is not performed.

- Intraoperative neurophysiological recording helps to identify and thereby preserve normal spinal cord and should be available.
- Certain groups of patients, for example those with neurofibromatosis types I and II, are at particular risk of developing intradural spinal tumours. They require monitoring and early resection if lesions enlarge or cause symptoms.
- Radiotherapy is appropriate treatment for some patients with high-grade tumours.
- Regular follow-up requires MRI scanning and clinical examination to identify and treat post operative complications or tumour recurrence.

Box 9 Core membership of the spinal cord MDT	
Appropriate cross cover should be available for all MDT members	
<i>Spinal Surgeons(s)</i>	Specialised spinal surgeon (neurosurgical/orthopaedic) but spends at least 50% of clinical programmed activities in neuro-oncological spinal surgery/spinal surgery and are members of a national specialist organisation.
<i>Neuroradiologist(s)</i>	A consultant radiologist in a substantive post with at least 50% of clinical programmed activities spent in the practice of neuroradiology.
<i>Neuropathologist(s)</i>	An accredited pathologist who is registered as a neuropathologist or histopathologist, has specialist expertise in neuro-oncology, and takes part in the national External Quality Assurance (EQA) scheme for neuropathology organised by the British Neuropathological Society.
<i>Clinical Nurse Specialist(s)</i>	A nurse with specialist knowledge of CNS tumours and skills in communication as defined by the Manual of Cancer Services. ²³
<i>Specialist AHP(s):</i>	Representative(s) of the allied health professionals, including, occupational therapy (OT), physiotherapy, dietetics

²³ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services*. London: Department of Health
Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

	and others as appropriate who have knowledge and experience of dealing with this patient group.
<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	An administrative post responsible for coordinating patient registration with the neuroscience MDT and data collection.
<i>Others as required (extended MDT members)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A named clinical oncologist • Specialist palliative care

A. Recommendations – intradural spinal cord tumours

285. These patients should be managed by teams that deal with patients with other spinal disease that may require surgical management (for example disc prolapse), including emergency services for patients with suspected cord compression.
286. There should be a single point of referral into the on-call spinal team for both imaging and specialist referral including urgent MRI scans, CT myelography, spinal angiogram and specialist management.
287. There should be access to intraoperative histopathological evaluation and intraoperative neurophysiological recording with appropriate neurophysiologist and technical support.
288. There should be access to appropriate rehabilitation services.

Skull Base Tumours

289. There is a wide variety of tumours of the base of the skull, ranging from slow growing to very aggressive, but they are usually associated with progressive morbidity as the tumour grows and invades. Most are diagnosed following the investigation of sino-nasal, balance, or hearing problems. Symptoms may include seizures, headache, nerve palsies, facial pain, hearing loss and balance disorders.
290. The commonest tumour at this site is the schwannoma, a low-grade, generally slow growing tumour that arises from the acoustic nerve.
291. The following principles of care apply:
- All patients will benefit at presentation from specialist multidisciplinary team (Box 10) discussion to formulate a management plan.
 - A combination of MRI and high resolution CT are used to assess the tumour before surgery. MR angiography, CT angiography, conventional angiography or a combination of these techniques may be needed to assess vascular involvement.
 - Endoscopic or CT-guided needle biopsy is usually required depending on the site involved. Occasionally, open intracranial biopsy is necessary.
 - Patients with skull base tumours also may require the following assessments before treatment:
 - Neuro-otological evaluation
 - Audiological testing
 - Specialist pathological assessment
 - Auditory-evoked brain stem responses testing
 - Vestibular testing

- Prosthetic assessment to establish the need for ocular, aural or skull bone replacement.
 - Speech and language therapy assessment and explanation to the patient of likely postoperative impairment.
 - Dietetic assessment of neurological status and the need for post operative nutritional support (for example, nasogastric or percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) feeding).
- Surgery is often the treatment of choice but complete excision is not always possible because of involvement of surrounding structures. Ventricular shunting or draining may be required for large tumours.
 - Because of the nature and location of these tumours the expertise of a variety of surgical specialists (ENT surgeon, maxillo-facial surgeon, specialist neurosurgeon or reconstructive surgeon) may be required.
 - Specialised techniques, such as embolisation of very vascular tumours, may be required.
 - Where complete excision is not possible, radiotherapy may be considered. The use of external beam conformal radiotherapy is well established and there is increasing evidence for the role of stereotactic techniques. Patients with small acoustic schwannomas can be offered the choice of surgery or stereotactic radiotherapy.
 - Follow-up may include imaging with CT, MRI, PET and bone scan and audiology.

Box 10 Core membership of the skull base MDT

Appropriate cross cover should be available for all MDT members

<i>Surgeons.</i>	Neurosurgical, ear, nose and throat (ENT), maxillofacial, ophthalmic or plastic surgeons. The skull base team should include or have access to surgeons proficient in reconstruction, including micro-vascular techniques. Each surgeon should be expected to dedicate specific time to skull base cancer.
<i>Neuroradiologist(s)</i>	A consultant radiologist in a substantive post with at least 50% of clinical programmed activities spent in the practice of neuroradiology.
<i>Neuropathologist(s)</i>	An accredited pathologist who is registered as a neuropathologist or histopathologist, has specialist expertise in neuro-oncology, and takes part in the national External Quality Assurance (EQA) scheme for neuropathology organised by the British Neuropathological Society.
<i>Oncologist(s)</i>	A clinical oncologist with a special interest in tumours of the skull base.
<i>Clinical Nurse Specialist(s)</i>	A nurse with specialist knowledge of brain and other CNS tumours and

	skills in communication as defined by the Manual of Cancer Standards ²⁴ .
<i>Specialist AHP(s):</i>	Representative(s) of the allied health professionals, including, prosthetist, speech and language therapy, dietetics and others as appropriate who have knowledge and experience of dealing with this patient group.
<i>Coordinator(s)</i>	An administrative post responsible for coordinating patient registration with the neuroscience MDT and data collection.
<i>Others as required (extended MDT members)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist palliative care

A. Recommendations – skull base

292. There should be ready access to MRI, high resolution CT, MR angiography, CT angiography and conventional angiography.
293. There should be ready access to pre-operative neurophysiological assessment.
294. An appropriate mix of surgical skills is required for these patients. This will necessitate that those surgeons forming the core or extended surgical team should have sufficient flexibility in their timetable to accommodate joint operating when necessary.
295. There should be access to stereotactic radiotherapy/radiosurgery.

²⁴ Department of Health (2004) *Manual for cancer services*. London: Department of Health
Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

296. *The following sections (B, C, D and E) apply to all tumours types described above.*

B. Anticipated Benefits

297. Management by specialist MDTs will improve the access to and appropriateness of treatment, as well as continuity of care and rehabilitation.

298. Early diagnosis and appropriate treatment that preserves neurological function will:

- improve survival
- reduce treatment related morbidity
- improve the patients' quality of life.

299. Improved extent of resection and functional and cosmetic outcome from the use of multiexpertise surgical teams.

Evidence

Pituitary tumours

300. Consensus-based UK clinical guidelines recommend the referral of patients with pituitary tumours to specialist centres where management plans may be agreed jointly by endocrinologists, pituitary surgeons and radiotherapists.

301. Consistent evidence supports the recommendation for specialist pituitary neurosurgery. A population-based American study reported lower perioperative mortality and complication rates for those hospitals and surgeons with a high case volume of trans-sphenoidal pituitary surgery. A UK institutional audit reported better cure rates when responsibility for pituitary surgery was transferred from a group of neurosurgeons to a single dedicated pituitary surgeon. In a large survey of American neurosurgeons, more experienced surgeons reported fewer complications of trans-sphenoidal pituitary surgery.

Spinal cord tumours

302. No studies comparing different service models for the management of patients with spinal cord tumours were identified.

303. A UK case series describing 13 children with primary spinal cord tumours highlighted the problem of diagnostic delay due to poor referral pathways. The delay between the onset of symptoms and diagnosis was several years for two patients and averaged approximately 10 months in the remainder of cases. The importance of prompt diagnosis and treatment is supported by case series describing the prognosis of patients with intramedullary spinal cord tumours. These studies identify tumour histology, neurological status before surgery and complete removal of the tumour as prognostic factors for outcome after surgery.

Skull base tumours

304. While no direct evidence relating to skull base MDTs was identified, other studies suggest that the concentration of expertise within dedicated teams could improve patient outcomes. Two population-based American studies, one nationwide and one limited to California, reported that outcomes for patients with acoustic neuroma were better if their surgery was performed at higher volume hospitals or by higher volume surgeons. Evidence-based clinical guidelines note that patients with acoustic neuroma require multidisciplinary care and recommend that such patients should be managed by centres treating large numbers of cases.

D. Measurement

305. Structure

- Evidence that fully staffed and functional MDTs for pituitary, spinal cord and skull base tumours have been established.
- Clear protocols for referral and management of such patients.

306. **Process**

- Staff attendance at MDT meetings.
- Times from presentation and diagnosis to first definitive treatment.

307. **Outcome**

- Survival.
- Treatment related morbidity.
- Quality of life.
- Patient and carer satisfaction.

E. Resource implications

308. The estimated annual employment cost for each pituitary MDT, for full attendance at monthly MDT meetings is between £11,388 for a one hour meeting and £16,668 for a two hour meeting. This estimate is for all core members plus preparation time for members including lead clinicians, key workers and MDT coordinators. However, with the exception of the MDT coordinator (who attends 100% of the MDT meetings), if other MDT members only attend the minimum of 50% of the MDT meetings the annual employment cost would be between £6,294 and £9,024 for a one and two hour meeting respectively.

309. The estimated annual employment cost for each spinal cord MDT, for full attendance is £9,144 for a one hour meeting and £12,924 for a two hour meeting. This estimate is for all core members plus preparation time for members including lead clinicians, key workers and MDT coordinators. However, with the exception of the MDT coordinator (who attends 100% of the MDT meetings), if other MDT members only attend the minimum of 50% of the MDT meetings the annual employment cost would be between £5,172 and £7,152 for a one and two hour meeting respectively.

310. The estimated annual employment cost for each skull base MDT, for full attendance is £12,888 for a one hour meeting and £18,912 for a two hour meeting. This estimate is for all core members plus preparation time for members including lead clinicians, key workers and MDT coordinators. However, with the exception of the MDT coordinator (who attends 100% of the MDT meetings), if other MDT members only attend the minimum of 50% of the MDT meetings the annual employment cost would be between £7,044 and £10,146 for a one and two hour meeting respectively.
311. Further details of the estimated employment costs for core members of pituitary, spinal cord and skull base tumour MDTs are in section 3.5 of the economic analysis report.

Chapter 7 - Treatment and follow-up: primary CNS lymphoma, medulloblastoma, pineal tumours and optic gliomas

312. Tumours of the brain and CNS in adults with an incidence of less than 1-2 per million per year include primary CNS lymphoma, medulloblastoma, pineal tumours and optic gliomas. As described in the background section, reliable data on the incidence of some of these CNS tumours are not available.
313. The majority of these patients will be managed initially by the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT through the pathways described in the MDT section. As with other CNS tumours, the diagnosis will often be suspected on imaging before surgery or biopsy confirmation.
314. Because of their rarity very few centres and clinicians will gain wide experience in managing patients with these tumours, which means that they present particular problems in management and service coordination. These problems are quite similar to those experienced in the management of tumours in children. The national coordination of treatment protocols through the UK Childrens' Cancer Study Group (UKCCSG) provides an excellent model for standardisation of care for adults with rarer tumours.
315. It is proposed that national tumour groups should be established and funded to standardise care for these patients. The neuroscience MDT would normally act as the conduit through which these national treatment protocols would be applied. It will be a responsibility of these MDTs to audit the adherence to these treatment protocols.

A. Recommendations – general

316. National tumour groups should be established to develop standardised guidelines and protocols for the investigation, management and clinical research of rare CNS tumours.
317. All patients with rare CNS tumours should be managed within the context of an MDT - usually the neuroscience MDT but, where appropriate, in collaboration with the cancer network MDT.

Primary Central Nervous System Lymphoma (PCNSL)

318. Primary central nervous system lymphoma (PCNSL) accounts for about 2% of all primary CNS tumours. A disease of middle and older age, it may be associated with immunosuppression (particularly HIV infection) and so all patients need to be investigated for evidence of immune suppression, including HIV infection.
319. Patients with PCNSL present in the same way as patients with other primary CNS tumours. Although the diagnosis may be suspected from CNS imaging, a biopsy is essential to diagnose and classify the lymphoma. Intraoperative histopathological evaluation of the biopsy specimen is necessary to establish the diagnosis and avoid further surgery. The prognosis is usually very poor and the disease may be associated with serious neuropsychological problems, the most severe of which is dementia. There is no benefit from surgical resection.
320. Management policies appear to vary around the country and there is little good research evidence on which to base management decisions. Steroids help to reduce symptoms and most patients who are fit enough are treated with chemotherapy. Regimes with high CNS penetration are required and the expertise to safely administer and monitor these treatments is essential in the multidisciplinary team managing the patients.
321. Post-chemotherapy radiotherapy may help to control the disease but its usefulness may be outweighed by the increased risk of dementia or

other neuropsychological problems. Early neuropsychological input and advice as part of the MDT approach is therefore essential. Patients who are frail, elderly or immunosuppressed may only tolerate less intensive treatment.

322. Following treatment most patients with PCNSL relapse and many of those who do not relapse or who relapse late have neurological problems. Follow-up arrangements are required that provide supportive care for patients during remission and consider further palliative treatment at relapse. There is no consensus about what this should be and no evidence that early detection and intervention is beneficial.

A. Recommendations - PCNSL

323. A national PCNSL tumour group should be established to unify management approaches, develop national standardised guidelines and treatment protocols and determine research programmes.
324. A multidisciplinary approach to the management and care of patients with PCNSL should be provided by the neuroscience MDT, and the cancer network MDT as described in the MDT section. It is important that a haemato-oncologist, medical or clinical oncologist with a special interest is involved in the management of lymphomas. Where the neuroscience MDT does not have appropriate expertise in the core membership, there should be a named representative of the lymphoma MDT who will act in this capacity.
325. Facilities for neurosurgery should include stereotactic biopsy, image guided surgery and on-site neuropathology service for intraoperative histopathological evaluation.
326. The on-site neuropathology service should have access to specialist lymphoreticular pathology services to distinguish lymphoma from other lymphoid pathologies and to grade and classify the lymphoma.
327. Chemotherapy services must meet the national standards for the delivery of intrathecal drugs.

328. There should be ready access to ophthalmic services as this disease often involves the visual pathways, and ophthalmic review will be required to complete disease staging.
329. All patients with HIV related lymphoma should also be under the care of the local HIV service.

Medulloblastoma

330. Medulloblastoma is a very rare tumour in adults and probably less than 50 patients present annually in England and Wales. It usually occurs in the posterior fossa and is associated with cerebellar symptoms and raised intracranial pressure. It commonly spreads through the craniospinal axis.
331. Patients need to have an MRI of the brain and whole spine before surgery. Standard treatment would be surgery to remove as much tumour as possible, followed by radiotherapy to the whole neuraxis. The role of chemotherapy following surgery and radiotherapy in the management of adults is not established.

A. Recommendations - Medulloblastoma

332. A national adult medulloblastoma tumour group should be established to unify management approaches, develop national standardised guidelines and treatment protocols and determine research programmes.
333. Patients with medulloblastoma should be reviewed by the neuroscience MDT and / or further investigations and treatment as appropriate.
334. All adult patients with medulloblastoma should receive their neuraxis radiotherapy in radiotherapy centres that also treat paediatric medulloblastoma.

Pineal tumours

335. Tumours involving the pineal gland or body are very unusual in adults. There are three main histological types: germ cell tumours (GCTs),

astrocytomas and pineal parenchymal tumours, which include pineocytomas and pineoblastomas.

336. Pineal tumours most commonly present with symptoms and signs of raised intracranial pressure. Because they are rare their clinical course and prognosis are not well described, but many GCTs and pineal parenchymal tumours are curable with appropriate management. Germ cell tumours occurring elsewhere within the CNS are managed according to similar principles as those in the pineal region.
337. Treatment varies according to the tumour type and needs to be part of the management plan developed and agreed by the neuroscience MDT. Surgery is often the treatment of choice and may require stereotactic or endoscopic biopsy, cerebrospinal fluid diversion or surgical resection of the tumour.
338. Radiotherapy may be needed, especially for GCTs, but only once the diagnosis has been confirmed from the histopathological evaluation of biopsy material. Craniospinal axis irradiation may be required for the treatment of patients with pineoblastoma and metastatic germ cell tumours. Stereotactic radiotherapy may be appropriate for low grade pineocytomas.
339. Chemotherapy can be used in the management of GCTs but has no proven role in the management of other pineal tumours.

A. Recommendations – Pineal tumours

340. A national pineal tumour group should be established to unify management approaches, develop national standardised guidelines and treatment protocols and determine research programmes.

341. Facilities for the neurosurgical management of patients with pineal lesions should have access to surgical teams practiced in complex pineal approaches and provide the following procedures:
- ventricular endoscopy (including third ventriculostomy)
 - stereotactic techniques
342. An on-site neuropathology service is essential to provide intraoperative histopathological evaluation.
343. Patients with low grade pineocytomas should have access to stereotactic radiotherapy services.

Optic Pathway Glioma

344. Gliomas of the optic nerve and tract account for approximately 2% of cerebral gliomas. They are slow growing and predominately occur in children with approximately 60% occurring in children less than 10 years of age. Optic pathway gliomas are classified by location and by their association or lack of association with neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1).
345. The signs and symptoms of optic gliomas usually develop over the course of 6 to 9 months and depend on the location of the tumour. Diagnosis is best made by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), but computerised tomography (CT) is superior for bony detail and detection of intratumoural calcifications, which suggest low grade histology.
346. These tumours vary in their growth, impact on vision and effect on local structures and need careful specialist management. In adults the tumours tend to grow quickly and result in rapid visual loss. Management is controversial and treatment decisions need to take into account the patient's age, association with NF1 and location of the tumour. Radiotherapy and chemotherapy should be considered in situations where surgery is not appropriate, e.g. irradiation of tumours of the optic chiasm.

347. These patients often have long term problems with vision, endocrine dysfunction and cognitive impairment.

A. Recommendations – Optic pathway glioma

348. A national optic glioma tumour group should be established to unify management approaches, develop national standardised guidelines and treatment protocols and determine research programmes.

349. A multidisciplinary approach to the management and care of patients with optic gliomas should be provided by the neuroscience MDT and the cancer network MDT, as described in the MDT section.

350. There should be access to ophthalmic services with regular ophthalmic review.

351. Endocrine support should be available where required.

352. There should be access to conformal stereotactic procedures.

353. Lifelong follow-up and support should be provided.

The following sections (B, C, D and E) apply to all tumours types described above.

B. Anticipated benefits

354. Establishing national groups to advise on the management of these rare tumours will ensure that:

- treatment policies are standardised across the NHS in England and Wales
- clinical research is encouraged and facilitated
- national audits can take place.

355. Having local protocols, based on national guidance, will ensure that the MDTs involve other non-core MDT members (for example,

haematologists for PCNSL) and that treatment is more efficient and more standardised.

C. Evidence

356. Authors agree that high dose methotrexate is the chemotherapy of choice for primary central nervous system lymphoma, although the dose is yet to be optimised. It appears to be no more effective when combined with other drugs than when given alone, prior to radiotherapy and/or cytarabine. As whole brain radiotherapy is associated with toxicity in older patients, it has been suggested that it be withheld in cases where a patient responds well to chemotherapy or is reserved for treatment of relapse. The effective dose of whole brain radiotherapy is yet to be determined and in elderly patients may represent a trade-off between the risk of relapse and the strong probability of disabling delayed neurotoxicity.

357. Very little evidence was identified to inform the configuration of services for adult patients with medulloblastoma, pineal region tumours or optic nerve glioma. Most studies were in paediatric populations where these tumours are more common. Evidence in adult populations was limited to institutional case series describing clinical presentation, diagnosis and treatment. Indirect evidence in support of specialist care comes from American observational studies of children with medulloblastoma. One of the studies observed that paediatric neurosurgeons were more likely than general neurosurgeons to resect more than 90% of a tumour. Another study noted that the overall survival of children treated in cancer centres was better than those treated elsewhere.

D. Measurement

358. **Structure**

- Establishment of national groups to advise on the management of rare CNS tumours.

- Local protocols for the management of rare tumours and for involvement of non-core MDT members in MDT meetings when needed.

359. Process

- Times from presentation and diagnosis to first definitive treatment.
- Number of patients treated each year per surgeon and per oncologist.
- Non-core member involvement in MDT meetings.

360. Outcome

- Postoperative mortality rate.
- Survival.
- Quality of life.

E. Resource implications

361. Treatment and follow-up for this group of patients has not been included in the resource implications. However, it is not considered to be a major resource implication of the guidance.

Genetic predispositions

362. Approximately 1% - 5% of brain tumours are due to genetic syndromes that confer an increased risk of developing tumours of the CNS. Patients with these genetic diseases provide an important insight into our understanding of the molecular mechanisms involved in cancer development. In addition, these patients need special care in terms of the management of their high risk status for the development of future tumours. Some of these tumours are associated with neurofibromatosis and several other inherited syndromes:

- **Cowden's disease**

363. Cowden's disease is characterised by multiple hamartomatous lesions and an increased risk of early onset breast and thyroid cancer and dysplastic gangliocytoma of the cerebellum.

- **Gorlin's syndrome**

364. Gorlin's syndrome is synonymous with naevoid basal cell cancer syndrome and is associated with an increased risk of medulloblastoma in children.

- **Li-Fraumeni syndrome**

365. Li-Fraumeni syndrome is primarily characterized by soft tissue and bone sarcomas and breast cancer. Other tumours that may occur are gliomas, leukaemia and adrenocortical cancer.

- **Neurofibromatosis**

366. Tumours of the CNS are seen with increased frequency in both type 1 and type 2 neurofibromatosis. These include acoustic nerve schwannomas, paraspinal neurofibromas, meningiomas and gliomas. Neurofibromas may undergo malignant transformation. The astrocytic gliomas are usually low grade and have a predilection for the optic pathways, hypothalamus and cerebellum.

- **Tuberous sclerosis**

367. Tuberous sclerosis is an inherited neurocutaneous disorder that is associated with the subependymal giant cell astrocytoma and benign cysts of kidney, liver and lung.

- **Turcot's syndrome**

368. Turcot's syndrome is occasionally associated with medulloblastomas and high grade gliomas.

- **Von Hippel-Lindau syndrome**

369. The von Hippel-Lindau syndrome is associated with benign vascular tumours, especially of the eye and cerebellum (haemangioblastoma). Renal, pancreatic and epididymal cysts are also common.

A. Recommendations

370. Patients with the above conditions require management within the context of a multidisciplinary team, which should incorporate advice from clinical geneticists on diagnosis and screening.

371. Coordinated follow-up and interval imaging / investigation of patients with neurocutaneous syndromes is best performed in combined specialised neurogenetic clinics where there is access to a neurologist and geneticist.

372. Cases with familial predilection to cancer (for example, Li-Fraumeni and Turcot's syndrome) are best coordinated via cancer genetic clinics or by clinicians with most appropriate clinical skills (for example, Turcot's – gastroenterology; Gorlin's – dermatology).

B. Anticipated benefits

373. Having clearly established and well known mechanisms for the identification and follow-up of these patients will lead to earlier diagnosis and management of brain and other CNS tumours.

C. Evidence

374. The NICE guidance *Improving outcomes for people with sarcoma* has considered the management of patients with neurofibromatosis and those with Li-Fraumeni syndrome, and the *Improving outcomes in people with skin tumours including melanoma* guidance considered the management of patients with Gorlin's syndrome. These documents recommend that the multidisciplinary team with the most appropriate clinical expertise should coordinate the care of these patients (for example the specialist skin MDT for those with Gorlin's syndrome). They also both recommend that patients with evidence of such a

genetic predisposition, and their families, should be offered referral to clinical genetics services.

D. Measurement

375. *Structure*

- Provision of specialised clinic for these patients.

E. Resource implications

376. It is recommended that patients are referred to cancer genetic services where appropriate. The capacity within existing cancer genetic services will require further investigation by local commissioners.

Chapter 8 - Supportive Care

Supportive Care

377. Supportive care is an umbrella term encompassing the work of a broad range of healthcare professionals to address the changing needs of patient and carers throughout the patient journey. The supportive care issues for patients with cancer have been extensively described in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*.²⁵
378. The needs of patients with brain and other CNS tumours are diverse and the supportive care services offered should not be dependent on diagnosis, but on need. The needs of a patient with a slow growing CNS tumour may be as great as those with a more aggressive tumour.
379. Patients with CNS tumours who require specialist supportive care may need to access these through the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT or the cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT. At all levels of care, referral criteria need to reflect the specific needs of this group of patients and be sufficiently flexible as to ensure the rapid and timely access to the necessary supportive care services.
380. All professionals involved in the provision of supportive care need to be aware of the full range of specialised services in the area, the local referral criteria and care pathways. Healthcare professionals offering supportive care may consider running joint clinics to facilitate the assessment and referral of patients to support services.

Communication

381. Good, rapid communication between healthcare professionals is particularly important for patients with CNS tumours whose care pathway is often complex. This will ensure that members of the

²⁵ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from; www.nice.org.uk

different multidisciplinary teams caring for the patient have timely, accurate knowledge and understanding of the patient's current situation thereby reducing the possibility of conflicting information being provided to the patient and carers.

382. Another aim of good communication is to ensure that the patient and carers have the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process about management and care. For this the patient needs sufficient information about prognosis to understand the advantages and disadvantages of treatment options. The ability however to communicate and be involved in the decision-making process may be compromised in patients with CNS tumours, as many have significant cognitive deficit either at presentation or during the course of their illness. In such cases, carers may need to be more involved in decision-making than the patient.

A. Recommendations

383. Communication skills training, sensitive to the particular needs of patients with CNS tumours, should be provided for healthcare professionals caring for these patients.
384. Healthcare professionals should have face-to-face communication with patients and carers at critical points in the care pathway to discuss diagnosis, prognosis, treatment options (including no treatment), recurrence and end-of-life care.

B. Anticipated benefits

385. Formal communication skills training will improve clinical care, particularly for CNS tumour patients, where cognitive and communication impairments are common.
386. Good communication will improve the experience for patients, carers and healthcare professionals throughout the patient pathway and ensure that, whenever possible, patients are partners in the decision-making process.

C. Evidence

387. A comprehensive literature review considered the issue of communication between healthcare workers and patients with high grade glioma. Evidence from three observational studies suggested that just over half the patients were aware of their prognosis. The relatives of patients tended to be more informed. There was only indirect and inconsistent evidence about how much patients wanted to know about their prognosis. No studies comparing ways of disclosing diagnosis or prognosis to patients with CNS tumours were identified.
388. In a recent UK observational study 25% of patients with brain tumours expressed concerns about the way in which doctors or nurses communicated with them.
389. Evidence from a systematic review, considered in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*, supports the use of communication skills training for healthcare professionals.

D. Measurement

390. **Structure**

- Provision of training in communication skills for all healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients with CNS tumours.
- Availability of key professionals with advanced communication skills for communicating complex medical information and potentially distressing information about prognosis, end-of-life issues etc.
- Development of guidelines for face-to-face communications at key points in the patient pathway.

391. **Process**

- Attendance at advanced communications skills courses by senior clinicians and key professionals treating CNS tumour patients.
- Evidence of the provision of clear, written records of significant communications and consultations at all points in the patient pathway and their outcome.
- Evidence of clear, timely communication of information and policies for informing relevant clinical teams in other settings (primary, secondary and tertiary care).
- Audit of interprofessional communication.

392. **Outcome**

- Patient, carer and healthcare professional satisfaction with communication process.
- Patient awareness of their diagnosis and prognosis before treatment is started, with the opportunity to be involved in decision-making.

E. Resource implications

393. The recommendation concerning communication skills training has not been formally costed as it is likely to be part of existing CPD arrangements.

Patient Information

394. The patient information issues for patients with cancer have been extensively described in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer (Topic 4, p. 64)*.²⁶

²⁶ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

395. Patients with CNS tumours have specific information needs, particularly when there is some degree of cognitive impairment. There are many specialist organisations that can help with the provision of suitable information for specific groups of patients. Information can be provided in different formats such as spoken, written and audio visual. Different patient groups and their families and carers will have different needs and the provision of access to appropriate information is important.
396. Healthcare professionals should discuss the use of complementary therapies with patients and carers and help identify possible side effects or interactions with conventional treatment.

A. Recommendations

397. There should be a nominated CNS tumours information lead at cancer network MDT level. CNS tumours information leads should consider ways to develop a regularly updated central register of information for patients.
398. Cancer networks should ensure that patient and carer groups have the opportunity to ask questions of specialist healthcare professionals. Cancer networks should determine the most effective way to facilitate this via their patient and public involvement arrangements.
399. Information on CNS tumour services should use existing high quality sources.
400. Information on CNS tumours should include national societies, appropriate websites and other relevant publications.
401. Information materials containing clear, accurate and relevant information about each CNS tumour type should be made available to patients and carers. This material should explain what patients can expect to happen to them at each stage of their pathway, and when and where each event will occur, with an explanation of the terminology. This will include information concerning any relevant clinical trials and research on a particular treatment.

402. Information on local specialist palliative care services should be available for professionals, patients and carers at each stage of the patient pathway.

B. Anticipated benefits

403. The provision of clear accurate information throughout the patient pathway will benefit patients, carers and healthcare professionals.

404. Timely communication with the GP and primary healthcare team about the information materials given to the patient at various stages of the pathway will minimise the risk of patients receiving conflicting information.

405. A lead for CNS tumours patient information will enable members of MDT and healthcare professionals involved with patients in other settings to increase their knowledge and level of support and coordination of services for the patient.

406. Through the information lead, information centre and group information sessions, patients and carers can be directed to additional sources of information, self-help and support in their area, particularly voluntary organisations that have relevant helpline and information services.

C. Evidence

407. A systematic literature review considered the provision of information for adults with high grade cerebral glioma. In one UK observational study approximately one third of patients and relatives said that the information they received lacked coherence. In two observational studies patients reported having to seek out information themselves. No studies comparing different methods of providing information were identified. Qualitative data about consultations confirmed that information about diagnosis and prognosis should be tailored to the individual coping of patients and relatives but there was insufficient evidence to suggest a standard approach to disclosure.

408. An observational study of outpatients at a London cancer centre observed that 38% percent of the 60 patients with brain tumours complained of a lack of information about their illness and treatment. Problems with concentration or memory were reported by 83% of patients with brain tumours, suggesting that the method of delivery of information is an important consideration for this group of people.

409. The development and distribution of information for patients and carers is considered in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. A systematic review confirms that patients with cancer obtain benefit from accurate and relevant information.

D. Measurement

410. Structure

- Evidence that patient pathway information is available that is specific to service provided.
- High quality patient information material available for each CNS tumour type in appropriate formats.
- A nominated lead for patient information on CNS tumours at the cancer network MDT.
- Provision of appropriate information materials.

411. Process

- Survey of MDT members' experience of the quality of information and support on CNS tumours provided by the cancer network lead.

412. Outcome

- Patient and carer satisfaction with information giving.

E. Resource implications

413. The total costs in England and Wales of producing information leaflets for patients with CNS tumours are estimated to be around £7,020 for the first year and £3,800 for subsequent years (this estimate does not include any overheads). The estimate is for up to three generic leaflets on different types of CNS tumours and neuroscience centre-specific leaflets. This calculation assumes that the leaflets are designed and produced collaboratively to avoid unnecessary duplication.
414. Further information can be found in the resource implication section of the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*

Psychological Support Services including Neuropsychology and Neuropsychiatry

415. The psychological support service issues for patients with cancer have been extensively described in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer (Topic 5, p.74)*.²⁷
416. Patients with CNS tumours may experience psychological difficulties adjusting to a serious, life-threatening condition in the same way as other cancer patients. In addition patients with CNS tumours frequently have cognitive and psychological problems and undergo personality changes.
417. Therefore clinical neuropsychologists, with specialist training and expertise in the assessment and management of cognitive impairment and personality change, and neuropsychiatrists, with specialist training and expertise in the management of patients with severe mental health problems in the context of organic brain disease, have a key contribution to the care of patients with CNS tumours.

²⁷ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

418. Regular assessment of all patients' psychological needs and monitoring of cognitive and personality changes are an important part of their continuing care. Such assessment includes joint working with a range of relevant healthcare professionals.

A. Recommendations

419. Psychological assessment and support should be an integral part of the multidisciplinary team management of patients.

420. Neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry services should be adequately resourced to enable referral of patients who require specialist intervention for cognitive, emotional or behavioural problems.

421. One member of the cancer network MDT should be nominated to coordinate referrals and communication with specialist psychology services.

422. Ongoing training should be provided for all staff providing psychological support to patients with CNS tumours and their carers.

423. The psychological and social well being of the patient and their carers should be considered throughout the course of the illness.

B. Anticipated benefits

424. A coordinated cancer network will be more capable of delivering consistent, efficient and effective psychological / psychiatric support to CNS tumour patients within the network.

425. There will be a reduction in psychological distress and improvement in health-related quality of life and some other functional outcomes.

C. Evidence

426. There is observational evidence that neuropsychological assessment consistently reveals cognitive deficits in patients with CNS tumours, both at the time of diagnosis and in long term survivors. Observational studies, in patients with CNS tumours undergoing radiotherapy and surgery, support the use of neuropsychological testing to evaluate the

effects of treatment. There is limited evidence to suggest that neuropsychological assessment during follow-up may reveal tumour recurrence although the effect of follow-up neuropsychological testing on patient outcomes is not yet established.

427. There is limited research about the changes in mood and personality associated with CNS tumours; there is some evidence that such changes are some of the hardest symptoms for relatives and carers to understand and cope with.
428. Observational studies evaluating the neurorehabilitation of patients with primary malignant CNS tumour indicate the effectiveness of such work. One such study reported on a series of patients with primary or metastatic tumours of the CNS, who underwent rehabilitation at a UK neurological rehabilitation unit. The study demonstrated a general improvement, measured using two scales of physical and cognitive functioning, and the majority of patients were discharged home.
429. Research on the effectiveness of neuropsychological rehabilitation has so far mainly involved patients with other pathologies, such as survivors of stroke or traumatic brain injury, who have comparable if distinct disabilities. Three systematic reviews of the effectiveness of cognitive rehabilitation following stroke and two evidence-based technology appraisals of cognitive rehabilitation following traumatic brain injury, however, were unable to draw firm conclusions due to variability in the methods and patient populations of the primary studies.
430. The need for neuropsychiatry services is supported by observational evidence that psychiatric states of depression and anxiety are relatively common in patients with CNS tumours, both before and after treatment, with a prevalence of between 17% and 30%. However expert opinion held that many patients who would benefit from neuropsychiatry services were not being referred. The complementary role of neuropsychology in this area is supported by consistent evidence from

systematic reviews of therapeutic psychological interventions for depression and anxiety in people with cancer (NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care in adults with cancer*).

D. Measurement

431. Structure

- Evidence of specific referral criteria to appropriate specialists, including neuropsychologists and neuropsychiatrists.
- A designated MDT member with responsibility for coordination and communication with specialist services.
- Provision of resources to enable staff to undergo the necessary training and continuing professional development.
- A documented organisational map of local specialist clinical services.

432. Process

- Evidence of MDT engagement in audit programmes.
- Annual record of number / proportion of patients referred on for specialist assessment and intervention.
- User surveys and questionnaires on psychological support needs and experiences.
- Delays in the provision of psychology / psychiatric services.

433. Outcome

- Patient and carer satisfaction.
- Quality of life.

E. Resource implications

434. The resource implications of providing psychological support services including neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry are presented in chapter 2 - multidisciplinary teams. Additional costs will be incurred in some neuroscience centres where the recommended staffing levels described in the resource implications for the MDT section are not met. Further details are provided in the economic analysis report.

Rehabilitation Services

435. The rehabilitation needs for patients with cancer have been extensively described in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer (Topic 10, p.134)*.²⁸

436. Patients with CNS tumours experience complex physical, cognitive and psychological problems. The ensuing functional impairment, loss of independence and potentially severe disabilities are distressing for patients and carers. Patients with a poor prognosis require urgent access to rehabilitation services to optimise function and maximise the quality of their remaining life. Some tumours carry a good long term prognosis, yet the patient's ability to live and function independently may be compromised and they may require ongoing rehabilitation services for a prolonged period of time.

437. Patients who are unable to continue to live independently need to be in an appropriate environment, where their individual needs can be identified and met by a range of health and social care professionals.

438. Rehabilitation services are provided by a range of allied health professionals (AHPs) including:

- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists

²⁸ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

- Speech and Language Therapists
- Dieticians.

439. The following health and social care professionals may also have a role in the provision of rehabilitation services for patients with CNS tumours:

- Nurses
- Primary healthcare team
- Neuropsychology, neuropsychiatry and psychological therapy
- Social services care manager / Continuing care manager
- Orthotists/Appliance officers
- Wheelchair services
- Chaplaincy services.

440. The NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer* describes a four level model of rehabilitation, assessment and support services with the range of healthcare professionals involved at each level.

Neurorehabilitation teams

441. Throughout their disease journey, patients with CNS tumours may require input from healthcare professionals depending on their own individual needs and problems. Multidisciplinary 'neurorehabilitation' teams provide services for stroke patients and patients with head injury, but it is not always possible for patients with CNS tumours to obtain treatment from these teams. There are several reasons for this:

- Strict referral criteria may exclude patients with CNS tumours
- A large workload may mean that it is not possible for the team to respond quickly enough to a patient with rapidly changing needs

- Healthcare professionals working in a neurorehabilitation team may feel inadequately trained to help patients with CNS tumours and require education, advice and support from more experienced specialist colleagues.

A. Recommendations

442. Commissioners should ensure that implementation of the recommendations in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*²⁹ includes services for patients with CNS tumours.
443. There should be rapid access to AHP assessment and rehabilitation services, including specialist neurorehabilitation, as the patient's condition changes.
444. There should be immediate access to specialist equipment, as necessary.
445. Cancer networks should nominate a lead AHP in neuro-oncology who has overall responsibility for coordinating the provision of rehabilitation services, education, training and research throughout the network.
446. In addition, cancer networks should ensure that specialist AHPs, working at level 4, are available throughout the network and that patients have access to these as and when appropriate.
447. Neurorehabilitation teams should be available for the continued rehabilitation of CNS tumour patients at home or in the community.
448. Where it is not feasible for CNS tumour patients to be cared for by the existing neurorehabilitation team(s), commissioners should ensure that an equivalent service is provided by a cancer network neuro-oncology rehabilitation team.

²⁹ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

449. Commissioners should work with local social services to ensure that age-appropriate long term placements can be found for those CNS tumour patients requiring such facilities.
450. Patients with spinal tumours should have the opportunity to undergo intensive rehabilitation in a specially adapted unit such as a spinal injuries unit in order for them to achieve their maximum functional potential. Commissioners need to ensure that spinal tumour patients can be admitted to such units and that the treatment program is appropriate to their needs.

B. Anticipated benefits

451. Effective and timely provision of rehabilitation services will help to optimise function and maximise quality of life for patients and carers.
452. A cancer network approach to service provision, including education and training for rehabilitation professionals, will ensure equitable access to services.

C. Evidence

453. Evidence for specialist motor and cognitive rehabilitation in patients with CNS tumours is of low quality, but several observational studies report on patients who undergo rehabilitation at specialist units.
454. These studies suggest that patients with primary or metastatic CNS tumours may benefit from rehabilitation, although the studies were non-comparative so it is impossible to say how much of the improvement was due to the rehabilitation. Studies measuring cognitive and motor functioning during rehabilitation found greater relative improvement in motor functioning than in cognitive functioning
455. The levels of functional improvement observed in observational studies are reported as similar to those seen in patients with traumatic brain injury.

456. It is unclear whether greater functional improvement is seen in patients who undergo concurrent radiotherapy to those who do not, although expert review evidence suggests that rehabilitation need not be excluded where aggressive therapy is taking place.

457. Studies report that a high proportion of patients with CNS tumours are discharged home following rehabilitation, although readmission to acute hospitals is also common.

D. Measurement

458. Structure

- Lead AHP in neuro-oncology in cancer network.
- Availability of cancer network wide access to appropriate rehabilitation specialists and services.
- Evidence of referral criteria to neurorehabilitation teams.
- Provision of rehabilitation facilities – inpatient, outpatient, domiciliary services, hydrotherapy, specialist neurorehabilitation services, specialist palliative care services.
- Provision of cancer network wide training/support/education programmes for all healthcare professionals involved in the care of patients with CNS tumours.

459. Process

- Audit of delays in the provision of rehabilitation services and equipment.
- Audit of numbers of specialist AHP coordinating rehabilitation.
- Audit of delays in the provision of long term placements in age appropriate facilities, where appropriate.

460. **Outcome**

- Patient and carer satisfaction.
- Quality of life.
- Functional status with rehabilitation.

E. Resource implications

461. Resource implications associated with allied healthcare professionals that provide neurorehabilitation services are presented in chapter 2 – multidisciplinary teams. Additional costs will be incurred in some neuroscience centres where the recommended minimum staffing levels described in the resource implications for the MDTs are not met. Further details are provided in section 5 of the economic analysis report.

462. Further information can be found in the resource implication section of the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*

General palliative care

463. The general palliative care issues for patients with cancer have been extensively described in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer* (Topic 8, p.105).³⁰

464. Although palliative care is particularly important for patients with CNS tumours in the later stages of their illness, a palliative approach is needed for many from the time of diagnosis.

465. As CNS tumours are relatively rare, most generalist health and social care professionals (members of the primary care team, community nurses, care home staff, hospital doctors and nurses, allied health professionals, social workers, self-help and support groups) will have

³⁰ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

very little experience of the particular care needs of these patients. However, they will be the ones who deliver the majority of care in most settings, including those where little or no specialist service is available. Palliative care may be only a small part of the normal workload of these professionals and so they should know when to seek advice from, or refer to, specialist palliative care services.

466. There are a number of important measures that can help them to provide a high quality service for patients with CNS tumours. These include access to education and training in palliative care, and being involved in regular assessment of the patients' needs.
467. Regular needs assessments will increase communication and cooperation between services providing care, and improve delivery of a service shaped to the individual needs of patients. To aid best practice in the community a GP practice-based managed plan of care for patients at home, such as the Gold Standards Framework³¹, could be used.
468. Patients with brain tumours may undergo progressive cognitive impairment, personality change and other neurological deterioration and it may not be feasible for them to determine their preferred place of care or death. An increased burden therefore may fall on relatives and other carers, who will in turn need appropriate support.
469. However, it is important that the patient's preferred place of death is noted and measures taken to comply when possible.

A. Recommendations

470. Palliative care education and training for healthcare professionals should include when and how to seek advice from, or refer to, specialist palliative care services.

³¹ Macmillan Cancer Relief (2005) *Gold standards framework*. ? publishing info? Available from: www.macmillan.org.uk

471. Patients with CNS tumours should have the opportunity for regular systematic needs assessment by healthcare professionals with training in general palliative care, and discussion with the local specialist palliative care service about further involvement as required.
472. The preferred place of care and place of death should be discussed with CNS tumour patients and carers and their wishes observed where possible.

B. Anticipated benefits

473. Implementation of the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*, with its emphasis on regular needs assessment, will increase communication and cooperation between the services providing care and with patients and their carers. This will lead to the delivery of a service better shaped to the patient's needs and increase the chances of the patient's preference for place of death being met.
474. Providing training and education for generalists will also aid the appropriate involvement of specialist palliative care throughout the course of the patient's illness.

C. Evidence

475. Most of the evidence presented in support of the recommendations for general palliative care was originally reviewed in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care in adults with cancer*.
476. Evidence from surveys suggests shortcomings in the assessment of the palliative care needs of patients with advanced cancer in general healthcare settings.
477. A recent literature review noted additional difficulties in the assessment of symptoms and concerns in patients with cognitive impairments as a result of a brain tumour.
478. Surveys of healthcare professionals have identified a need for education and training in the management of patients with advanced

stage illness. Evidence from randomised controlled trials supports the use of such training programmes in helping to change clinical practice. There is limited evidence that the use of guidelines can help coordinate referral from general to specialist palliative care services.

479. A UK survey into trends over a 10-year period showed that, whilst many people wanted to die at home only around 25% of people with cancer did so, the remainder dying in hospital, hospice or care home. Reasons for the change in place of death included lack out-of-hours of nursing care, medication or equipment as well as a change of mind by the patient.

D. Measurement

480. Structure

- Availability of criteria / pathway for referral to Specialist Palliative Care, including contact information, service provided etc.
- Availability of a Preferred Place of Care plan for patients with CNS tumours.

481. Process

- Development of palliative care training / education for generalists and audit of staff involved in direct patient care who have attended such sessions.
- Audit of CNS tumour patients achieving / maintaining their preferred place of care, and death.

482. Outcome

- Survey of MDT members experience of access to Specialist Palliative Care for patient needs.
- Surveys of CNS tumour patients and carers satisfaction with general palliative care access and provision, and the outcome of the preferred place of care plan.

E. Resource implications

483. The resource implications of the recommendations for general palliative care for patients with brain or other CNS tumours and their carers have not been included in the resource implications. It may be helpful for commissioners to refer to the economic review for the NICE guidance on *Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer*.

Social Support and Continuing Care

484. The social support needs of the patient will vary according to the level of disability, progression of disease, patient preference, level of carer support and informal services. The provision of care should meet the needs of patients allowing for age, gender and cultural differences.
485. Continuing care (or long term care) is a general term that describes the care which people need over an extended period of time, as the result of disability, accident or illness, to address both physical and mental needs. The care can be provided in different settings: NHS hospital, nursing home, residential home or in the patient's home. Patients with an intermediate prognosis but with a high level of care require joint assessment between NHS and local council in accordance with *Continuing care: NHS and local councils' responsibilities*.³² There is a 'duty of partnership' between health authorities and councils. Collaborative working across these boundaries is necessary.

A. Recommendations

486. The provision of long term care arrangements should be in accordance with *Continuing care: NHS and local councils' responsibilities*.
487. Younger patients with continuing care needs should also be carefully considered. Procedures must be in place to ensure the continuing care needs of younger patients with CNS tumours are appropriately met.

³² Department of Health (2001) *Continuing care – NHS and local councils' responsibilities*. London: Department of Health. Available from: www.dh.gov.uk

488. Needs for social support should be elicited as an integral component of routine assessment, ideally undertaken with or by a social care professional.

Chapter 9 - Specialist Palliative Care

489. Specialist palliative care services help patients with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses that are no longer responsive to curative treatment. Specialist palliative care teams manage complex symptom problems and also provide spiritual and emotional support for patients and carers. They may also be a resource for the education and support for healthcare professionals. These services are provided by statutory and voluntary organisations and cover the spectrum of community, hospice and hospital settings. The NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer* published in March 2004 provides detailed information and makes recommendations about specialist palliative care which complement and inform this site-specific guidance (Topic 9, p.122).³³
490. Brain tumour patients in particular, have palliative care service needs. They may often experience progressive neurological, cognitive and personality changes over the course of their illness and there may sometimes be rapid changes in their symptoms especially when disease is advanced. Most of these patients could benefit from specialist palliative care around or soon after the time of diagnosis, but for many this does not happen until much later in their illness when they are considered to have reached the terminal phase.
491. Closer integration between specialist palliative care and neuro-oncology services throughout the patient's illness can help a smooth transition from more active treatment to palliative care. This will require opportunities for sharing patient care, such as joint clinics and joint ward rounds, as well as ensuring that palliative care specialists are included at MDT meetings.

³³ National Institute for Clinical Excellence (2004) *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence. Available from: www.nice.org.uk

A. Recommendations

492. Palliative care specialists should be included as members of the neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT and the cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT to provide advice on palliative and supportive care and the management of symptoms and to contribute to the patient's management plan.
493. Cancer networks should ensure that healthcare professionals in neuro-oncology services and specialist palliative care services work closely together throughout the patient's illness to ensure an appropriate balance between active treatment and palliative care.
494. Cancer networks should ensure that there are mechanisms in place for the referral of patients with CNS tumours to specialist palliative care services, with referral at the time of diagnosis, when appropriate.
495. Information on local specialist palliative care services should be available for healthcare professionals, patients and carers at each stage of the patient pathway.

B. Anticipated benefits

496. Closer integration between services and involvement of specialist palliative care earlier in the patient pathway will improve communication and ensure that services are more responsive to patients' needs. This will lead to increased levels of patient and carer satisfaction.
497. Closer working relationships between healthcare professionals will aid patients' timely transfer between services and treatments which maximise survival to those that emphasise optimising symptom control, function, emotional support and quality of life.
498. Improved continuity of care between services and settings could help more patients to continue in their preferred place of care both as their illness progresses and when they are dying.

C. Evidence

499. There is consistent evidence, reviewed in the NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer*, to show that specialist palliative care teams in hospital, hospice and community settings are effective for the control of pain and symptoms of people with cancer. Patients cared for by such teams were also more satisfied than those cared for elsewhere. It follows that involvement of specialist palliative care, as soon as is appropriate, should benefit CNS tumour patients. The importance of early involvement of specialist palliative care teams for the specific, and often severe, symptoms experienced by people presenting with CNS cancer is supported by a recent literature review. A 2003 observational study of outpatients attending a London cancer centre, including 60 patients with brain tumours, identified a high level of unmet need for specialist palliative care, especially amongst those with lung cancer or brain tumours.
500. It seems likely that clear referral criteria and a closer working relationship between neuro-oncology and specialist palliative care services will improve communication, support and coordination of care. There is insufficient evidence at present, however, to specify the best mix of roles and links between services to ensure that patients' palliative care needs are met. The NICE guidance *Improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer* considered the coordination of palliative care. Evidence from two randomised controlled trials suggests that a nurse coordinator, acting as the link between patient and health services, reduced the number of days spent in hospital by the patient, the number of home visits by the community care team and helped to enable patients to die at home.

D. Measurement

501. **Structure**

- Evidence that palliative care specialists are included as members of MDT meetings

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- Availability of referral criteria to specialist palliative care
- Evidence of integration of patient care between neuro-oncology services and specialist palliative care
- Provision of information on specialist palliative care services

502. **Process**

- Audit of referrals to specialist palliative care.
- Audit of shared decision-making, communication and information on patient care.
- Audit of time to provision of specialist palliative care interventions.
- Audit of symptom control.

503. **Outcome**

- Patient, carer and professional satisfaction with experience of service / care.

E. Resource implications

504. The resource implications of providing specialist palliative care for patients with brain or other CNS tumours are presented in chapter 2 – multidisciplinary teams. Additional costs will be incurred in some neuroscience centres where the recommended minimum staffing levels to provide a safe and sustainable service are not met. Further details are included in section 5 of the economic analysis report.

505. It may be helpful for commissioners to refer to the economic review for the NICE guidance on *Improving Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer*.

Chapter 10 - Information management

506. The information available on the management of patients with brain and other CNS tumours in England and Wales is limited. Two regional studies within the UK have shown that the registration of patients with primary brain tumours is very incomplete. There is also very little reliable information on the national incidence of some of the rarer tumour subtypes, for example brain and CNS lymphoma.

507. Good quality data are required to establish a baseline for future comparisons, to provide commissioners with information about appropriate service provision, to monitor performance against standards and to show improvements in outcome.

508. Collecting data on this group of tumours is particularly difficult for the following reasons:

- They present via a diverse variety of routes
- They have a complex classification system subject to change between ICD-10 revisions, which often do not conform to the WHO classification
- Their management is often complex, involving different teams and services that may not be part of the same cancer network
- Some are diagnosed on the basis of imaging only, without histopathological confirmation.

509. It is therefore very important that, as a minimum, information is recorded for clinical audit purposes on:

- All patients with a radiological diagnosis of CNS tumours
- Any further investigations and the confirmed diagnosis (with the cancer registry notified)
- The management plan agreed by the specialist MDT

- The initial treatment provided
- Outcomes, both short- and long-term.

510. Complex pathways of care however, also mean that additional information has to be easily available to support MDT decision-making and clinical management.

A. Recommendations

511. Data collection systems should be in place which allow entry of information on all patients with a radiological or histopathologically confirmed CNS tumour and should be made available to healthcare professionals. Consideration should be given to a web-based information system that complies with data protection legislation, to allow easy data sharing across the service.

512. A local retrieval system that identifies all radiology reports that mention CNS tumours should be developed and will be required until digital, coded reporting systems are universal.

513. The lead clinician of the neuroscience MDT and the lead clinician of the cancer network MDT should assume overall responsibility for ensuring that complete data are collected, verified and recorded on all patients reviewed by the teams. Strong links with the local cancer registry should be developed to ensure complete and accurate registration of all patients.

514. The data collection responsibilities of the various MDT members should be clearly defined in local protocols.

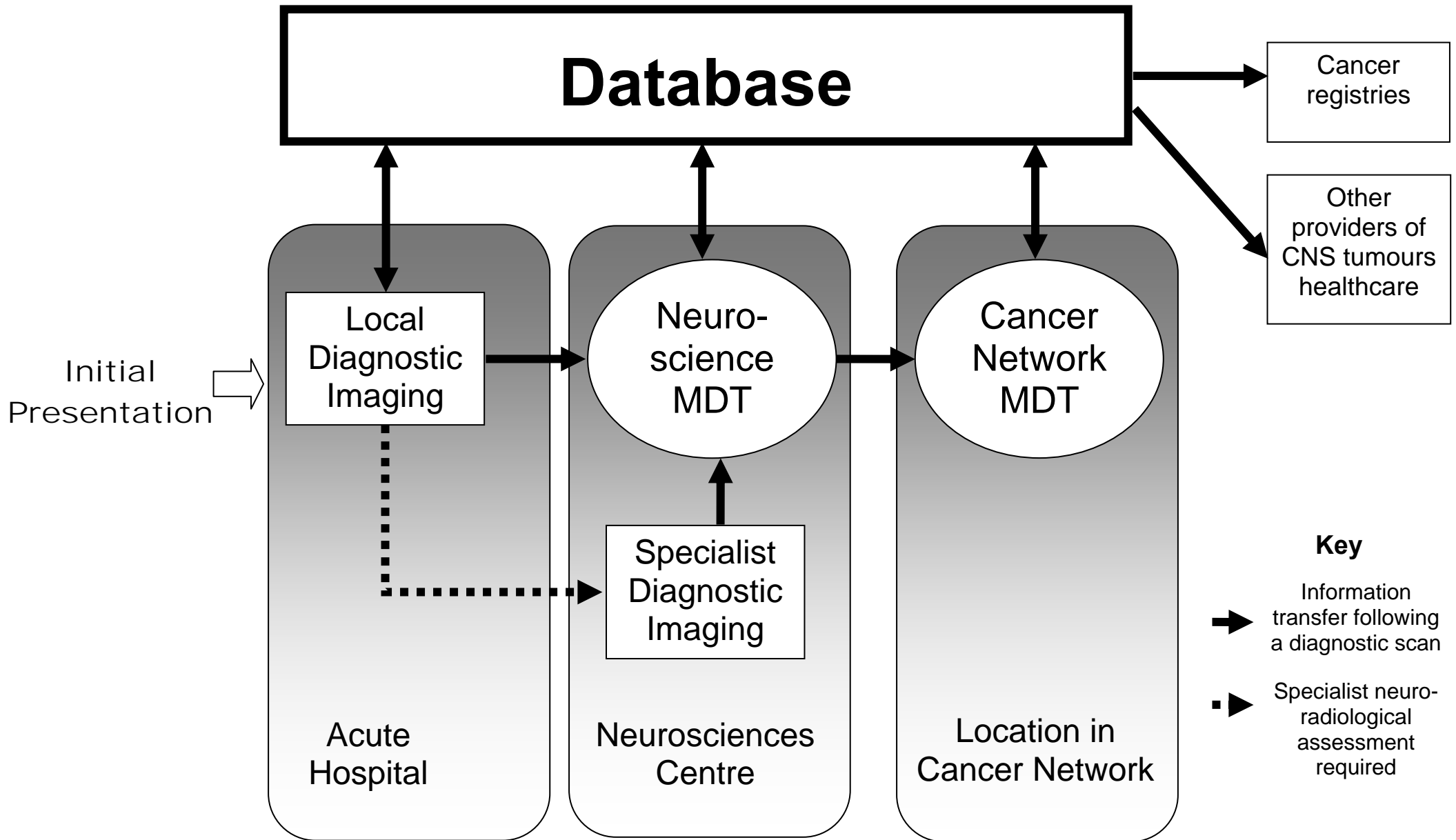
515. Adequate clerical support should be provided for the MDTs to facilitate data collection.

516. The national minimum datasets for CNS tumours should be adopted in both England and Wales when they become available.

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517. Information collected by cancer registries should be used for the national annual report on CNS tumours.

518. A schematic representation of the information management pathway is shown in Figure 6:



B. Anticipated benefits

519. A web-based database and data collection system will enable members of the MDT to enter and review information on patients at all stages of the patient pathway regardless of where treatment or care is delivered. In addition it will provide a versatile mechanism that will facilitate data entry regardless of the exact structure of service provision at a local level.

520. Such a system will:

- ensure that all patients with CNS tumours are recorded
- improve registration
- enable management of patients through an appropriate MDT structure
- enhance management of patients to agreed protocols
- allow better monitoring of the access of patients to palliative and supportive care and to advice and support from AHPs
- make regular clinical audit of the processes (access, appropriate investigation and treatment, waiting) and outcomes of care easier
- improve communication between clinical teams
- improve recruitment into trials.

C. Evidence

521. A comprehensive review of primary and secondary brain tumour incidence studies published between 1966 and 1995 provides indirect evidence of the incompleteness of existing data sources. Studies using a single source (such as a cancer registry or hospital database) to identify patients reported incidence rates that were 30% lower than studies using two to four sources, and 50% lower than studies that used more than four sources.

522. A 2001 study of primary brain tumour registration between 1992 and 1996 compared a clinical database with official figures from the Devon and Cornwall regional cancer intelligence unit. Only 52% of potential cases identified from the clinical database were entered in the official registry, suggesting that figures from registries could significantly underestimate the incidence of primary brain tumours. The study also reported that patients in the registry were not a representative sample of the clinical population with brain tumours. Factors increasing the likelihood of a patient being registered were: having had an operation, being older than 60 and requirement for radiotherapy. Survival calculated using registry data could therefore be underestimated, since patients with poorer prognosis were more likely to be registered.

523. A study of the incidence of primary and secondary brain tumours from 1989 to 1990 in the Lothian region of Scotland used multiple methods of case ascertainment to identify 442 patients. Only 34% of the patients were entered in the Scottish Cancer Registry.

D. Measurement

524. Structure

- Compatible local, regional and, eventually, national electronic information systems which comply with Data Protection legislation.

525. Process

- Evidence that information on all patients is available at MDT meetings.
- Evidence of network, supra network and national audits of treatment and care.

526. **Outcome**

- Short, medium and long-term survival of patients undergoing treatment for brain tumours that includes information on cancer stage, co-morbidity, age and other features of case mix.
- Complication rates after surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy.
- Quality of life and short term and long term adverse effects of treatment.

E. Resource implications

527. The economic implications of this aspect of the guidance are expected to be low. The resource implication section of chapter 2 - multidisciplinary teams includes employment costs for MDT coordinators with clerical support included in the employment cost estimates for minimum staffing levels. This will ensure that there is full recording of information. In view of the low incidence and the increasing automation of cancer registries, it is unlikely that any additional costs will be incurred.

Chapter 11 - Research

528. The research evidence on which the care of patients with brain and other CNS tumours is at present based is incomplete and often inadequate. There are several reasons for this:

- CNS tumours are uncommon with many histological tumour types, some of which are extremely rare
- only a small proportion of CNS tumour patients are recruited into clinical trials
- comparison between trials is often difficult because of varied entry criteria
- clinical trials have mainly investigated treatment and largely ignored other important issues such as diagnosis and supportive care
- there is no coordinated approach across UK neuropathology departments to the collection and storage of adult CNS tumour samples for scientific research.

529. New technologies with proven usefulness in other areas of cancer care require specific validation before being brought into general use for patients with CNS tumours.

530. Currently, clinical neuro-oncology research in this field in the UK is haphazard and uncoordinated and dependent on the enthusiasm and interest of individual clinicians and departments. This situation is unlikely to improve where the critical mass of clinical researchers is both small and dwindling from lack of support. Although a very significant proportion of laboratory research is funded by charitable bodies, improvements in the treatment of these rarer tumours is unlikely to match that of more prevalent cancers until funding for research is at least equivalent. This should be directed at strengthening the manpower and infrastructure of clinical research units through, for example, the UKCRC network initiative. Such support would enable

well supported units to compete equally for the appropriate nationally funded grant monies. Further integration of basic laboratory and translational research through such organisations as British Neuro-Oncology Society, Society of British Neurological Surgeons and NCRN should be supported. The development of the NCRI / NCRN / CTAAC trials framework together with these initiatives offers a unique opportunity to develop effective CNS tumour research with a strategic, co-ordinated approach, active leadership, careful management and administrative support to advance the field and ensure that NHS money is spent appropriately.

531. There are some specific clinical / therapeutic issues that are important and need to be considered in the development of a clinical research programme:

- Many trials of the management of patients with high grade gliomas have been selective in patient entry and future trials need to include patients that represent the spectrum of disease to reduce selection bias.
- The most effective method for the management of patients with low grade glioma is unclear
- There is no robust evidence from patients with either high or low grade gliomas comparing the effects of resection and biopsy on survival and quality of life.
- There are several new radiotherapy techniques, new chemotherapy agents and methods of drug delivery that are being introduced into clinical practice but still need proper evaluation.
- The effects of treatment following first and subsequent relapse on survival and quality of life are uncertain
- There is little evidence that the use of newer imaging techniques for surveillance alters clinical outcomes for patients.

- There is currently no nationally coordinated programme of translational research for adult CNS tumours, which could usefully interact with such organisations as the EORTC.
532. A particular issue for patients with CNS tumours is the effect that the disease itself and the treatment may have on cognitive function. Neuropsychological assessment, in conjunction with other performance measures, has been shown to give a better indication of adverse effects of treatments and it may also have a role in the early detection of recurrence of low grade gliomas. Further research is needed to explore these issues.
533. Communication may be or become a problem for these patients when they develop cognitive problems, and there is clearly a need for further research into the most effective ways of communicating information about diagnosis, prognosis and progression of disease and how this may affect quality of life.
534. There is also scope for health services research into various aspects of care in particular into the most appropriate use of the healthcare professionals involved in supportive care and rehabilitation, and into the links between services to ensure that patients' needs are met most effectively and efficiently.

A. Recommendations

535. NHS R&D, all relevant research charities, NCRI and senior researchers in this field should collaborate and jointly plan a programme of clinical and translational CNS tumour research and its funding and fostering the appropriate research structure in collaboration with the UKCRC.
536. Opportunities to develop new diagnostic tests for CNS tumours should be facilitated by supporting the inclusion of biological studies alongside clinical trials, the retention and storage of appropriate tumour samples for these studies, and translational research aimed at taking molecular markers from the research to the health service environment.

537. All neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDTs should have an active and up to date NCRN portfolio of clinical trials to offer to patients.
538. Cancer networks will need to demonstrate how they intend to ensure that trials are supported and patient entry into these studies should be actively monitored.
539. A national approach should be developed for the storage and retention of tumour samples, with appropriate consent, and for a coordinated programme of basic science and translational research to complement the clinical research programme.

B. Anticipated benefits

540. A greater number of patients with CNS tumours will have access to clinical trials.
541. There should be further improvements in outcomes with increased research.

C. Evidence

542. A recent study estimated years of life lost using data from the East Anglian Cancer Registry to represent the population burden from 17 cancers. While patients with tumours of the CNS had the highest average years of life lost per patient, this tumour group attracted only 1.5% of NCRI research spending (using 2002 figures).
543. There is some evidence to suggest low enrolment rates of patients with CNS tumours in clinical trials. The Glioma Outcomes Project reported in 2005 that only 15.1% of their group of 788 American patients with high grade glioma were enrolled in clinical trials.
544. The incompleteness of the evidence base for the management of CNS tumours is reflected in the number of systematic reviews unable to draw useful conclusions due to lack of high quality research. A recent review of randomised clinical trials in low grade glioma, for example, identified only three completed RCTs of radiotherapy and one of

chemotherapy which was terminated prematurely. In the absence of high quality RCTs reviewers must rely on evidence from studies with diverse protocols which are often low powered. It is reasonable to assume that collaboration between research centres should improve the quality of the evidence-base both by increasing trial accrual and through the use of agreed protocols.

D. Measurement

545. Structure

- Adequate provision of resources including research staff for the entry of patients into clinical trials.
- Evidence that local research arrangements, particularly within the MDTs, are promoting the participation in national clinical trials.

546. Process

- Surveys of the number of eligible patients who are offered entry to an appropriate clinical trial.

547. Outcome

- Outcomes of patients treated within a clinical trial or research protocol.

E. Resource implications

548. The resource implications of the research recommendations have not been formally costed. Priorities for allocating research funds are made by national, government and charitable medical research funding agencies.

Appendix 1

Scope of the guidance

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

SCOPE

1. Guidance title

Guidance on Cancer Services: Improving outcomes for people with tumours of the brain and central nervous system (CNS).

1.1 Short title

Brain and CNS tumours

2. Background

- a) The National Institute for Clinical Excellence ('NICE' or 'the Institute') has commissioned the National Collaborating Centre for Cancer to develop service guidance on tumours of the brain and central nervous system for use in the NHS in England and Wales. This follows referral of the topic by the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government (see Appendix). The guidance will provide recommendations for service provision that are based on the best available evidence

- b) The Institute's service guidance will support the implementation of the National Service Frameworks (NSFs) in those aspects of care where a Framework has been published. The guidance will support current national initiatives outlined in the *NHS Cancer Plan*, the Calman Hine report, the Cameron report, the *Manual of Cancer Service Standards for England* and the *All Wales Minimum Standards for Cancer Services*.

The guidance will also refer to other NICE service guidance documents currently under development, including *Referral guidelines for suspected cancer*, *Supportive and palliative care for people with*

cancer, Improving outcomes in child and adolescent cancer, Improving outcomes in head and neck cancers and Improving outcomes in haemato-oncology. Cross reference will be made to these and other documents as appropriate.

3. Clinical need for the guidance

- a) There were approximately 4000 new cases of primary brain and other CNS tumours in adults registered in the UK during 1999 (Cancer Research UK). These cancers can occur at any age but are more common in adults over 40 years of age. In 2001 around 3300 adults died from brain and other CNS tumours (Cancer Research UK). These figures are now widely thought to be an underestimate and this issue needs investigation as part of the Guidance development.³⁴
- b) Although relatively uncommon tumours, at around 2% of all registered cancers, the treatment of brain and CNS tumours is complex requiring the input of many different health care professionals. A proportion of patients are significantly disabled physically, cognitively and psychologically by their illness and the consequences of treatment. This adds considerably to the overall burden of care for both family and health care professionals.

4. The guidance

- a) The guideline development process is described in detail in three booklets that are available from the NICE website (see 'Further information'). *The Guideline Development Process – Information for Stakeholders* describes how organisations can become involved.
- b) This document is the scope. It defines exactly what this piece of service guidance will (and will not) examine, and what the developers will consider. The scope is based on the referral from the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government (see Appendix).

³⁴ Pobereskin LH; Chaddock JH. Incidence of brain tumours in two English counties: a population based study. *Journal Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* 2000;**69**:464-471

- c) The areas that will be addressed by the guidance are described in the following sections.

4.1 Population

4.1.1 Groups that will be covered

- a) Adults with tumours of the brain (including primary CNS lymphomas and teratomas), meninges and other sites in the central nervous system.
- b) Adults with cranial nerve tumours and primary base of skull tumours
- c) Adults with pituitary tumours.
- d) Adults with brain metastases from tumours at other primary sites in whom complex neurological or neurosurgical intervention is required.
- e) Adults with syndromes where there is a recognised increased lifelong risk of CNS tumour formation.
- f) Adults with nerve root tumours compressing the spinal cord.

4.1.2 Groups that will not be covered

- a) Children and adolescents with brain and CNS tumours whose care will be covered by the Child and Adolescent guidance.
- b) Adults and children with tumours of peripheral nerves.
- c) Adults and children with other space occupying brain lesions (for example, arteriovenous malformation).

4.2 Healthcare setting and services

- a) Primary care, including diagnosis, treatment and follow up.
- b) Secondary care, including the role of cancer networks and multidisciplinary teams.
- c) Tertiary care in cancer centres and neuroscience centres.
- d) Specialist rehabilitation centres

- e) Quaternary care in specialist centres for particular indications (for example, stereotactic radiosurgery).

4.3 Key areas of clinical management

The following key areas of clinical management will be included, because they have direct implications for service delivery.

- a) Services for diagnosis and staging (excluding those being addressed as part of the updated referral guidelines) including:
- primary care
 - acute services in secondary care
 - neurology departments
 - neurosurgical departments
 - pathology departments
 - diagnostic radiology departments
 - psychiatric services
 - endocrinology departments

In addition, the guidance will address the important issue of data collection and registration of brain and CNS tumours.

- b) Treatment services, to include treatment in the following settings:
- neurology departments
 - neurosurgical departments
 - cancer centres
 - cancer units
 - endocrinology departments
 - specialist centres providing stereotactic radiosurgery.
- c) Follow up.
- d) Rehabilitation and supportive care of patients with physical and neuropsychological/neuropsychiatric disability.
- e) Specific elements of supportive and palliative care that meet the particular needs of patients with brain and CNS tumours, and of their families and carers.
- f) Communication and information resources for patients, carers, family members and health care professionals
- g) Health service research and clinical trials on service delivery.

4.4 Audit support within the guidance

The guidance will include key criteria for audit, which will enable objective measurements to be made of the extent and nature of local implementation of this guidance, particularly its impact upon practice and outcomes for adults with brain and CNS tumours.

4.5 Status

4.5.1 Scope

This is the draft scope, which is subject to a 4-week period of consultation with stakeholders. After the consultation, the scope will be re-drafted and submitted to the Guideline Review Panel and then to the Institute's Guidance Executive for approval. Once approved, it will be posted on the Institute's website.

4.5.2 Guidance

The development of the service guidance recommendations will begin in January 2004.

5. Further information

Information on the guideline development process is provided in:

- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for the Public and the NHS*
- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for Stakeholders*
- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for National Collaborating Centres and Guideline Development Groups.*

These booklets are available as PDF files from the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk). Information of the progress of the guideline will also be available from the website.

Appendix – Referral from the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government

The Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government asked the Institute:

“To prepare service guidance for the NHS in England and Wales for tumours of the brain and central nervous system. This would form part of the *Improving cancer outcomes* series with NICE expected, as previously, to involve DH and NAW closely in the development of the guidance. In particular, DH and NAW should be alerted at an early stage to any issues in the developing guidance, which are likely to lead to significant changes in the current service provision.”

Appendix 2.1

List of LGG and HGG tumour classification

Based on World Health Organisation Classification of CNS Neoplasms
(2000)

GLIOMAS	WHO GRADE	GROUPING
Astrocytic tumours		
Diffuse astrocytoma	2	LGG
Anaplastic astrocytoma	3	HGG
Glioblastoma	4	HGG
Pilocytic astrocytoma	1	LGG
Pleomorphic xanthoastrocytoma	2	LGG
Subependymal giant cell astrocytoma	1	LGG
Oligodendroglial tumours		
Oligodendroglioma	2	LGG
Anaplastic oligodendroglioma	3	HGG
Mixed gliomas		
Oligoastrocytoma	2	LGG
Anaplastic oligoastrocytoma	3	HGG
Ependymal tumours		
Ependymoma	2	n/a
Anaplastic ependymoma	3	n/a
Myxopapillary ependymoma	1	n/a
Subependymoma	1	n/a

Appendix 2.2

EORTC Criteria

Details to follow

Appendix 3

Economic implications of the guidance

Executive summary

The economic consequences of the recommendations of the “*Guidance on Cancer Services: Improving Outcomes for Brain and Other CNS Tumours*” in England and Wales are set out in this document. The analysis focuses on those aspects of the key recommendations that are likely to be of greatest consequence in terms of costs.

The summary of economic implications is outlined in Table 1.

There is uncertainty concerning the estimates presented and there will be variation at the neuroscience centre and cancer network level. Sensitivity analyses were conducted where appropriate in the estimated costs. Further assessments will be needed at cancer network level and/or NHS trust level to determine the exact cost implications. Work is currently being carried out in the NHS in England, in connection with ‘Payment by Results’, to develop a better understanding of costs of treatment and care. This may help these assessments in the future.

Table 1 Summary of estimated annual economic implications

	Costs per year (£)	
	Lower range	Upper range
Staffing costs of weekly neuroscience MDT meetings	73,840	189,124
Staffing costs of monthly cancer network MDT meetings	6,954	17,532
Core employment costs of neuroscience centre for patients with brain and other CNS tumours	1,308,005	2,180,008
Staffing costs of monthly pituitary MDT meetings	6,294	16,668
Staffing costs of monthly spinal cord MDT meetings	5,172	12,924
Staffing costs of monthly skull base MDT meetings	7,044	18,912
Total employment costs of additional clinical nurse specialists	1,932,346	
Total employment costs of additional neuropathologists	1,474,208	
Employment costs for each MRI scanner	268,071	
Molecular pathology costs (staffing and test costs for MGMT assay)	1,283,090	
Cost of producing information leaflets (for all patients with brain and other CNS tumours in England and Wales)	7,020 (yr1) 3,800 (subsequent yrs)	

Neuroscience and cancer network multidisciplinary teams (MDTs)

The Guidance recommends that attendance at MDT meetings should form part of the timetabled activities for core MDT members. It is assumed that extra resources will need to be made available to enable staff to attend MDT meetings. Meeting costs are derived by estimating the time spent attending meetings by different staff, multiplied by their hourly rate (salary and on-costs), in addition to preparation time. It is assumed that extra resources will need to be made available to enable staff to attend MDT meetings.

It is anticipated that for those cancer networks with no neuroscience brain and other CNS tumours MDT in place, there will be an annual opportunity cost of between £73,840 for minimum attendance at weekly two hour neuroscience MDT meetings and up to £189,124 for full attendance at weekly three hour neuroscience MDT meetings.

All cancer networks will have an additional opportunity cost for establishing a cancer network brain and other CNS tumours MDT. This is estimated to be between £6,954 per year for minimum attendance at monthly one hour MDT meetings, and £17,532 for full attendance at monthly two hour MDT meetings.

Minimum staffing costs at neuroscience centres

The annual employment costs of the core staffing components of a neuroscience centre treating 100 new patients per year is estimated to be around £1,744,006 ($\pm 25\%$ range, £1,308,005 to £2,180,008). This estimate is uncertain. There will be economies of scale for neuroscience centres that have all facilities on site. As a result of this uncertainty, and others discussed later in this report, a sensitivity analysis of $\pm 25\%$ has been applied. It needs to be emphasised that the costs represent opportunity costs, as the staff involved in the treatment centres will already be contracted to the NHS.

Site specific MDTs

For each pituitary MDT in place, there will be annual opportunity costs of between £6,294 for minimum attendance at monthly one hour MDT meetings, and £16,668 for full attendance at monthly two hour MDT meetings.

For each spinal cord MDT in place, there will be annual opportunity costs of between £5,172 for minimum attendance at monthly one hour MDT meetings, and £12,924 for full attendance at monthly two hour MDT meetings.

For each skull base MDT in place, there will be annual opportunity costs of between £7,044 for minimum attendance at monthly one hour MDT meetings, and £18,912 for full attendance at monthly two hour MDT meetings.

Clinical Nurse Specialists

The needs assessment⁶ conducted to inform the guidance development indicated that there was a variation in the numbers of clinical nurse specialists for neuro-oncology across England and Wales. Although 3 (of 27) neurosurgical units and 4 (of 45) oncology/radiotherapy units had more than the recommended minimum staffing for clinical nurse specialists in neuro-oncology the remainder had less. To ensure that there are a minimum of 1.5 specialist nurses at each unit, a further 39.2 FTE would need to be recruited at oncology/radiotherapy units and a further 11.5 FTE at neurosurgical units. Therefore, an additional 50.7 FTE clinical nurse specialists are required in England and Wales at an estimated annual employment cost of £1,932,346.

Neuropathologists

A report for the Royal College of Pathologists from the British Neuropathological Society has recommended that there should be one FTE neuropathologist per 1,000,000 patients¹³. In order to achieve this level, a further 15 FTE posts are required across England and Wales with an estimated employment cost of around £1,474,208. There are currently seven single-handed neuropathologists in England and Wales, and these would need to be supported to ensure continual cover of the adult neuro-oncology service in these centres.

Diagnosis – Radiology

Although there is no requirement for additional imaging facilities for people with brain and other CNS tumours, there is a need for the existing scanners to be adequately staffed to ensure that they are able to operate throughout the working day. It has been estimated that the staffing level required in order to run an MRI scanner during normal working hours would be 1.3 FTE consultant neuroradiologists, 3.0 FTE neuroradiographers plus additional administrative support¹². The annual cost of this level of staffing is £268,071 per MRI scanner.

Diagnosis – Pathology

Molecular diagnosis is a fast developing area of clinical practice, and commissioners will need to plan for expansion over the next 10-20 years. Existing services are adequate for approximately 200 patients with gliomas who require molecular cytogenetic 1p/19q testing in the UK per year. If the MGMT assay becomes available, then this would rise to about 2,500 patient tests which would require 30 additional biomedical scientists (at maximum) across England and Wales, giving an additional staffing cost of £783,090. The costs of consumables (including infrastructure costs) would probably be in the region of £200 per test. The total additional annual cost for 2,500 MGMT tests including consumables for the tests and staffing to perform them is £1,283,090. If two more similar molecular tests were to be adopted for brain and other CNS tumours over a period of ten years, then the total costs may double¹³.

Patient Information

The Guidance suggests that patients with brain and other CNS tumours have specific information needs, particularly when there is some degree of cognitive impairment and require information to be provided in different formats such as spoken, written and audio visual. The total cost of producing generic and centre specific information leaflets would be £7,020 in the first year for all patients with brain and other CNS tumours in England and Wales. In subsequent years the costs of production would be £3,800.

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A wide range of high quality information is available from a variety of sources on the internet. These mainly include charitable foundation web pages. Set-up costs of having information available are therefore unlikely to be significant. .

Appendix 4

How this guidance manual was produced

This service guidance is intended to guide health organisations (Strategic Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Local Health Boards, Cancer Networks and Trusts), their managers and lead clinicians in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of services for people with brain and other CNS tumours. The information and recommendations in the manual are based on reviews of the best available evidence on diagnosis, treatment and service delivery. This evidence is retrieved by information specialists and assessed by researchers within the National Collaborating Centre for Cancer (NCC-C) and the recommendations are the product of extensive discussion with the Guidance Development Group (GDG). A brief overview of the development process to produce the guidance is provided below.

The first stage in the development of the guidance was the production of a scope (Appendix 1) which defined in detail the patient population, the healthcare settings and services and key areas of clinical management that the guidance should cover. This was then subject to a four week consultation with registered stakeholders in line with NICE methodology. Following this a multidisciplinary GDG was formed comprising clinicians representing the main stakeholder organisations and representatives from relevant patient organisations and charities (Appendix 5.2). The GDG was convened by the NCC-C and chaired by Dr Penny Bridger in close association with the Clinical Lead, Dr Sean Elyan. All GDG members made and updated any declarations of interest. The Group met on a monthly basis during development of the guidance and NCC-C staff provided methodological support and leadership for the development.

During the development phase of the guidance the GDG identified areas where there was a requirement for expert input on particular specialist topic areas. These topics were addressed by the production of a position paper by a recognised expert who had been identified via the relevant registered stakeholder organisation. All relevant expert positions papers are presented in Appendix D of the Evidence Review (in separate file for consultation).

The identification and retrieval of evidence to support the recommendations in the guidance manual is described in detail in the Evidence Review. Briefly, there were three stages to this process:

- *Clinical question development.* Members of the GDG were asked to submit clinical questions to the NCC-C on issues covered by the project scope.
- *Literature searching.* All clinical questions were prioritised and were subject to either a systematic or 'high level' search.
- *Critical appraisal.* Finally all full papers relevant to each clinical question were appraised using the methodology described in the *NICE Guideline Development Methods* manual.

It should be noted that most of the published research on cancer topics focuses on clinical evaluations of treatment; little direct research has been carried out on the organisation and delivery of services.

In order to gain insight into the current cancer services provision for patients with brain and other CNS tumours, a needs assessment was commissioned by the GDG and NCC-C. This study was carried out by Dr Ciaran Humphreys at the National Public Health Service Wales, the full results of which are published separately on the NICE website.

All the evidence reviews used to inform the manual are summarised in the document *Improving Outcomes in Brain and Other CNS Tumours: the Research Evidence* and includes details of all the studies appraised. This document is available on CD-ROM, a copy of which is included on the inside cover of the manual.

Additional complementary research, designed to quantify the potential cost of major changes in services, was carried out by the Centre for the Economics of Health, Institute of Medical and Social Care Research (IMSCAR) at the University of Bangor. This work involves literature searching, interviews with clinicians and managers, and analyses of costs.

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The writing of the guidance manual was coordinated by the Chair and Clinical Lead of the GDG in accordance with all members of the GDG, assisted by Dr Fergus Macbeth and Dr Andrew Champion at the NCC-C.

The production of this guidance was funded by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), and has been subject to the full NICE consultation process.

Appendix 5

People and organisation involved in the production of this guidance

- 5.1 Members of the Guidance Development Group**
- 5.2 Organisations invited to comment on guidance development**
- 5.3 Researchers carrying out literature reviews and complementary work**
- 5.4 Expert advisors to the Guidance Development Group**
- 5.5 Reports commissioned to assist with guidance development**
- 5.6 Members of the Guideline Review Panel**

Appendix 5.1

Members of the Guidance Development Group (GDG)

GDG Chair

Dr Penny Bridger

Deputy Director of Public Health, Surrey and
Sussex SHA (until October 2005)

Consultant in Public Health Medicine, Information
Services, National Services Scotland (from October
2005)

GDG Lead Clinician

Dr Sean Elyan

Consultant Clinical Oncologist, Cheltenham
General Hospital

Guidance Development Group Members

Professor Mark Baker	Director and Lead Clinician, Yorkshire Cancer Network
Dr Juliet Britton	Consultant Neuroradiologist, St. George's Hospital, London
Mrs Katherine Carpenter	Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist, The Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford
Miss Joanne Carr	Physiotherapist, Christie Hospital, Manchester
Professor Garth Cruickshank	Professor of Neurosurgery, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham
Mrs Angela Dickson	Patient/Carer Representative, Samantha Dickson Research Trust
Professor David Ellison	Professor in Neuropathology, Newcastle General Hospital
Dr Robert Grant	Consultant Neurologist, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh
Professor Phil Heywood	Professor of Primary Care Development, University of Leeds
Dr Martine Meyer	Consultant in Palliative Medicine, St Helier Hospital, Carshalton (from July 2004)
Professor Roy Rampling	Consultant Oncologist, Western Infirmary, Glasgow
Mr Steve Sparks	Assistant Director Specialist Commissioning, Kent, Surrey and Sussex Specialist Commissioning Group
Dr Sharon Swain	Patient/Carer Representative, The Brain and Spine Foundation
Miss Emma Townsley	Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialist, National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery, London
Dr Esther Waterhouse	Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Loros Hospice, Leicester (until July 2004)

Appendix 5.2

Organisations invited to comment on guidance development

Addenbrooke's NHS Trust

All Wales Senior Nurses Advisory Group (Mental Health)

Amersham Health

Anglesey Local Health Board

Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland

Association of British Neurologists

Association of Hospice and Specialist Palliative Care Social Workers

Association of Neuro-oncology Nurses (ANON)

Association of Professional Music Therapists

Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland

Association of the British Pharmaceuticals Industry (ABPI)

Aventis Pharma

Bard Limited

Barking, Havering & Redbridge NHS Trust

Barts & The London NHS Trust

BASIC (Brain and Spinal Injury Charity)

Bath and North East Somerset PCT

Bayer PLC

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Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire NHS Strategic Health Authority

Boehringer Ingelheim Ltd

Boston Scientific Limited

Brain and Spine Foundation

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

British Association of Neuroscience Nurses

British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

British Dietetic Association

British National Formulary (BNF)

British Nuclear Medicine Society

British Oncology Pharmacy Association

British Orthoptic Society

British Paediatric Neurology Association

British Psychological Society, The

British Psychosocial Oncology Society

British Society of Neuroradiologists

British Society of Paediatric Radiology

British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine

BUPA

Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood (UK)

Cancer Research UK

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Cancer Services Collaborative 'Improvement Partnership' (CSCIP)

Cancer Services Co-ordinating Group

Cancer Voices

CancerBACUP

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Children's and Adolescent Cancer Partnership (CACP)

Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust

Clinovia Ltd

College of Occupational Therapists

Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust

Cornwall Partnership Trust

Department of Health

Derbyshire Mental Health Services NHS Trust

Eisai Limited

Elan Pharmaceuticals Ltd

Eli Lilly and Company Ltd

Faculty of Public Health

GE Health Care

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust

Gorlin Syndrome Group

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Guerbet Laboratories Ltd

Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Strategic Health Authority

Headway - The Brain Injury Association

Healthcare Commission

Help Adolescents with Cancer

Help the Hospices

Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Trust

Institute of biomedical Science

Joint Committee on Palliative Medicine

Link Pharmaceuticals

Macmillan Cancer Relief

Marie Curie Cancer Care

Medeus Pharma Ltd

Medical Research Council Clinical Trials Unit

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)

Merck Pharmaceuticals

National Alliance of Childhood Cancer Parent Organisations

National Cancer Alliance

National Cancer Network Clinical Directors Group

National Cancer Research Institute (NCRI) Clinical Studies Group and
National Cancer Research Network NCRN

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National Patient Safety Agency

National Public Health Service - Wales

Neurological Alliance

NHS Direct

NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

NHS Modernisation Agency, The

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland

Novartis Pharmaceuticals UK Ltd

Pfizer Limited

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust

Richmond & Twickenham PCT

Royal College of Anaesthetists

Royal College of General Practitioners

Royal College of General Practitioners Wales

Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Royal College of Pathologists

Royal College of Physicians of London

Royal College of Psychiatrists

Royal College of Radiologists

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Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists

Royal College of Surgeons of England

Royal College of Surgeons of England - 2nd contact

Royal College Patient Liaison Groups

Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain

Samantha Dickson Research Trust, The

Schering-Plough

Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)

Sheffield Children's NHS Trust

Sheffield South West Primary Care Trust

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Society and College of Radiographers

Society for Endocrinology

Society of British Neurological Surgeons

South West Peninsula Strategic Health Authority

Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust

Teenage Cancer Trust, The

Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority

The International Brain Tumour Alliance

The Medway NHS Trust

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The Royal Society of Medicine

The Royal West Sussex Trust

The Stroke Association

UK Children's Cancer Study Group

University College London's Hospital NHS Trust

University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust

University of Leeds

Vale of Aylesbury PCT

Velindre NHS Trust

Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust

Welsh Assembly Government (formerly National Assembly for Wales)

Appendix 5.3

Researchers carrying out literature reviews and complementary work

Overall co-ordinators

Dr Fergus Macbeth National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Dr Andrew Champion National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Project Managers

Dr Nansi Swain National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Karen Field National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Senior Researcher

Dr Mary Webb National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Researchers

Dr Nathan Bromham National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Andrew Cleves National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Dr Karen Francis National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Dr Angela Melder National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Information specialist

Stephanie Arnold National Collaborating Centre for Cancer, Cardiff

Health Economists

Dr Rhiannon Tudor Edwards Director, Centre for the Economics of Health,
Institute of Medical and Social Care Research,
University of Wales, Bangor

DRAFT FOR SECOND CONSULTATION

Dr Dyfrig Hughes Locum Director, Centre for the Economics of Health,
Institute of Medical and Social Care Research, University
of Wales, Bangor

Pat Linck Research Officer, Centre for the Economics of Health,
Institute of Medical and Social Care Research, University
of Wales, Bangor

Eugenia Priedane Research Officer, Centre for the Economics of Health,
Institute of Medical and Social Care Research, University
of Wales, Bangor

Needs assessment

Dr Ciaran Humphreys Specialist Registrar, National Public Health Service for
Wales

Appendix 5.4

Expert advisors to the Guidance Development Group

Dr Howard Ring	Chair of Special Interest Group in Neuropsychiatry, Royal College of Psychiatrists
Mr David Sandeman	Consultant Neurosurgeon, North Bristol NHS Trust
Society for Endocrinology	

Appendix 5.5

Reports commissioned to assist with guidance development

Needs assessment – Dr Ciaran Humphreys, Specialist Registrar, National Public Health Service for Wales

Appendix 5.6

Members of the Guideline Review Panel

Chair:

John Hyslop

Members:

Graham Archard

Tony Donovan

Mark Emberton

Patricia Fairbrother

Stephen Karp

Appendix 6

Glossary of Terms

Adenoma	Adenomas are benign epithelial tumours of glandular tissue.
Adjuvant chemotherapy	Chemotherapy treatment which is given in addition to the main cancer treatment.
Adjuvant therapy	Additional treatment that is added to increase the effectiveness of the main treatment.
Aetiology	The cause or origin of disease.
Allied health professional (AHP)	One of the following group of healthcare workers: physiotherapists, occupational therapists, art therapists, chiropodists/podiatrists, dietitians, drama therapists, music therapists, orthoptists, paramedics, prosthetists/orthotists, radiographers, speech and language therapists.
Angiography	The X-ray visualisation of the internal anatomy of the heart and blood vessels after injection of a radio-opaque (shows up on X-rays) contrast material.
Asymptomatic	Without obvious signs or symptoms of disease. In early stages cancer may develop and grow without producing symptoms.
Audiology	The study of hearing.
Audit	A review and evaluation of healthcare procedures.
Autosomal	Refers to a chromosome that is not involved in determining sex. If a disorder is autosomal it affects both males and females equally.
Base of skull	The sloping floor of the cranial cavity.
Benign	Not cancerous; not malignant.
Biopsy	Removal of a sample of tissue or cells from the body to assist in diagnosis of a disease.
Brachytherapy	Radiotherapy delivered by a temporary or permanent implant of radioactive material into a tissue or organ.
Brain tumour	A tumour found in the intracranial portion of the central nervous system.
Cancer	Growth of altered body cells that keep on growing and is able to spread from where it started to another part of the body.
Cancer Networks	The organisational model for cancer services to implement the NHS Cancer Plan, bringing together health service commissioners and

	providers, the voluntary sector and local authorities. There are currently 34 Cancer Networks in England covering a population of between 600,000 and 3 million (two-thirds serve a population of between 1 million and 2 million people).
Cancer registry	An organisation which systematically collects information about cancer incidence and mortality within its resident population.
Carcinoma	Cancer of the epithelial tissue that covers all the body organs and lines all the body cavities. Most cancers are carcinomas.
Central nervous system	The portion of the nervous system comprising the brain and spinal cord.
Cerebrospinal fluid	The fluid that flows around the brain and the spinal cord.
Chemosensitivity	The specific sensitivity of an individual to chemotherapy drugs.
Chemotherapy	The use of drugs that kill cancer cells, or prevent or slow their growth.
Clinical nurse specialist	A nurse with specialist knowledge of CNS tumours and skills in communication as defined by the Manual of Cancer Services.
Clinical oncologist	A doctor who specialises in the treatment of cancer patients, particularly through the use of radiotherapy, but who may also use chemotherapy.
Clinical oncology	The specialist treatment of cancer patients, particularly through the use of radiotherapy, but which may also use chemotherapy.
Clinical trial	A research study with patients, usually to evaluate a new treatment or drug.
Cognitive	Relating to the mental processes of comprehension, judgement, memory and reasoning.
Cohort studies	Research studies in which groups of patients with a particular condition or specific characteristic are compared with matched groups who do not have it.
Community nurse	A nurse who provides care to individuals in the community and outside of hospital.
Computed tomography (CT)	An x-ray technique which produces cross-sectional images.
Concordance	A new way of defining the process of successful prescribing and taking medicines, based on a partnership between doctors and patients (see www.medicines-partnership.org).
Cranial nerves	The 12 pairs of nerves that emerge from the cranial cavity through

	openings in the skull.
Craniotomy	A surgical incision or opening into the skull.
Curative	Aiming to cure a disease.
Cytogenetics	The study of chromosomes and chromosomal abnormalities.
Cytological examination	The examination of cells on a microscope, especially for diagnosis, performed by a specialist in pathology.
Cytopathology	The study of disease changes within individual cells or cell types.
Diagnostic imaging	Visualising body structures to help identify a disease or condition, by using X-ray, ultrasound, radioisotopes or magnetic resonance.
Diagnostic investigations	Tests undertaken to establish the nature of disease
Diagnostic radiographer	The role of the diagnostic radiographer is to work closely with other specialists, to provide safe and accurate imaging examinations, to give patients information and support and to discuss possible side effects and care.
Dietitian	The healthcare professional responsible for the planning and managing of the patient's diet in hospital and providing dietary advice for a wide range of medical conditions. OR A specialist in the study of nutrition.
Ear, nose and throat (ENT)	Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the ear, nose and throat.
Endocrine	Having to do with glandular tissues that secrete hormones directly into the bloodstream.
Endocrinologist	A doctor who specialises in treating diseases of the endocrine system.
Endoscopy	The visual inspection of any cavity of the body using a special instrument.
Epidemiology	The study of populations in order to determine the frequency and distribution of disease and measure risks.
Epilepsy	A group of neurological disorders characterised by recurrent episodes of either convulsive seizures, sensory disturbances, abnormal behaviour or loss of consciousness.
Excision	Removal by surgery.
Fractionation	Dividing the total dose of radiation therapy into several smaller, equal doses delivered over a period of several days.

Germ cell	The reproductive cells of the body. In men, the testicular cell that divides to produce the immature sperm cells; in women, the ovarian cell that divides to form the egg.
Glial	Specialised cells that surround neurons and provide physical support and insulation.
Glioma	A cancer of the brain that begins in glial cells (cells that surround and support nerve cells).
Gorlin's syndrome	An inherited condition that can increase the chance of developing basal cell carcinoma. Also called basal cell nevus syndrome.
Gynaecologist	A doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders affecting the female reproductive organs.
Haematologist	A doctor who specialises in disorders of the blood and blood-forming tissues.
Haematopoietic	The process by which blood cells are produced in the bone marrow.
High grade glioma	A tumour that grows rapidly and has an aggressive behaviour. High-grade tumours are grades 3 & 4 in the WHO classification. The grade of CNS tumour correlates with prognosis (1-best; 4-worst).
High-grade	These tumours tend to behave more aggressively and have the least amount of resemblance to normal cells.
Histological	Relating to the study of cells and tissue at a microscopic level.
Histology	The study of the normal body's tissues and cells by examination under a microscope.
Histopathologist	A clinical doctor who specialises in examining abnormal tissue samples microscopically in order to make a diagnosis and to ensure tumour excision is complete.
Histopathology	The study of disease by microscopic examination of the changes in diseased tissues.
Holistic	Looking at the whole system rather than just concentrating on individual components.
Imaging	The production of a clinical image using radiology, for example an X-ray or ultrasound.
Immunosuppression	Suppression of the body's immune system and its ability to fight infections or disease. Immunosuppression may be deliberately induced with drugs. It may also result from certain diseases such as lymphoma or from anticancer drugs.

Intracranial pressure	Pressure that occurs within the cranium (skull).
Intra-operative	Relating to the period during a surgical procedure.
Intrathecal	Into the fluid around the spine.
Ionising radiation	High-energy electromagnetic waves (e.g. X-rays) and particles (e.g. electrons) used for radiotherapy treatment.
Irradiation	The use of high-energy radiation from X-rays, gamma rays, neutrons and other sources to kill cancer cells and shrink tumours.
Key worker	Person who, with the patient's consent and agreement, takes a key role in coordinating the patient's care and promoting continuity, ensuring the patient knows who to access for information and advice.
Lesion	An area of abnormal tissue.
Leukaemia	Cancer of the blood-forming system in the bone marrow, usually characterised by the production of abnormal white blood cells, which may be present in the bone marrow and blood.
Li-Fraumeni syndrome	An inherited family trait carrying an increased risk of cancer during childhood and early adulthood.
Local health board	Statutory bodies in Wales responsible for commissioning and providing health services on behalf of the local population.
Low grade glioma	A tumour that grows slowly, but which may or may not be successfully treated. Low-grade tumours are grades 1 & 2 in the WHO classification. The grade of CNS tumour correlates with prognosis (1-best; 4-worst).
Lymphoma	Cancer that begins in cells of the immune system, the lymphocytes (a type of white blood cell). OR Cancer of the lymphatic system. There are two main types of lymphoma – Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)	A non-invasive method of imaging which allows the form and metabolism of tissues and organs to be visualised (also known as nuclear magnetic resonance).
Malignant	Cancerous. Malignant tumours can invade and destroy nearby tissue and spread to other parts of the body.
Margin	The edge or border of the tissue removed in cancer surgery
Maxillofacial	The speciality which combines full surgical training with dental

	expertise for the treatment of diseases, injuries, tumours and deformities of the face and jaws.
Medical oncologist	A doctor who treats cancer patients through the use of chemotherapy, and for some tumours, immunotherapy.
Medical oncology	The specialist treatment of cancer patients through the use of chemotherapy, and for some tumours immunotherapy.
Medulloblastoma	A malignant brain tumour that begins in the lower part of the brain and that can spread to the spine or to other parts of the body.
Meninges	The three membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord.
Meta-analysis	The statistical analysis of the results of a collection of individual research studies in order to add the findings together.
Metastases	Cancerous tumours in any part of the body due to spread from the original (primary) origin.
Minimum dataset	A widely agreed upon and generally accepted set of terms and definitions making up a core of data acquired for medical records and used for developing statistics for different types of analyses and users.
Molecular genetics	The branch of genetics that focuses on the chemical structure and the functions, replication and mutations of the molecules involved in the transmission of genetic information, namely DNA and RNA.
Molecular pathology	New techniques for identifying molecular abnormalities in the DNA of tumour cells.
Morbidity	Either (1) the state of being diseased; or (2) the morbidity rate, which reflects the number of cases of disease per unit of population in any specific region, age group, disease or other classification, usually expressed as cases per 1000, 10,000 or 100,000.
Morphology	The science of the forms and structures of organisms.
Mortality	Either (1) the condition of being subject to death; or (2) the death rate, which reflects the number of deaths per unit of population in any specific region, age group, disease or other classification, usually expressed as deaths per 1000, 10,000 or 100,000.
Nasogastric feeding	Feeding via a tube that is passed through the nose and into the stomach.
Needle biopsy	The removal of tissue or fluid through a needle for examination of cells under a microscope.
Neoplasm	An abnormal mass of tissue that results from excessive cell division.

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Neurofibromatosis	A genetic condition in which people develop multiple, benign tumours of nerve tissue.
Neuroimaging	Production of images of the brain by non-invasive techniques, for example, computed tomography, magnetic resonance imaging or positron emission tomography.
Neurological	Having to do with the nervous system.
Neurologist	A doctor who diagnoses and treats disorders of the central nervous system.
Neuro-oncology	The branch of medical science dealing with tumours of the nervous system.
Neuropathology	The study of disease processes in the nervous system
Neuropsychiatry	The branch of psychiatry relating to disorders of the central nervous system.
Neuropsychology	A discipline combining neurology and psychology to study the relationship between the functioning of the brain and cognitive processes or behaviour, using psychological testing and assessment to assay central nervous system function and diagnose specific behavioural or cognitive deficits or disorders.
Neuroradiologist	A doctor trained in radiology specialising in creating and interpreting pictures of the nervous system.
Neuroradiology	The branch of radiology that deals with the nervous system.
Neurorehabilitation	Rehabilitation that concentrates on improving physical and cognitive or understanding impairment resulting from damage to the nervous system.
Neurosurgeon	A doctor who specialises in surgery on the brain, spine and other parts of the nervous system.
Neurosurgery	Surgery on any part of the nervous system.
Observational study	A non-randomised study that observes the characteristics and outcomes over time of subjects who do and do not take a particular therapy.

Occupational therapist	<p>A specialist who is concerned with a person's ability to participate in meaningful occupations and the impact of their environment on this; they will work with a person to design a programme of intervention based on the individual's unique lifestyle, environment and preferences.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>A health professional trained to help people who are ill or disabled learn to manage their daily activities.</p>
Oncologist	<p>A doctor who is trained to treat patients with chemotherapy (medical oncologist), radiotherapy or both (clinical oncologist).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>A doctor who specialises in treating cancer.</p>
Oncology	<p>The study of the biology and physical and chemical features of cancers. Also the study of the causes and treatment of cancers.</p>
Ophthalmology	<p>The area of medicine dealing with the eye.</p>
Optic disc	<p>The small blind spot on the surface of the retina.</p>
Optic glioma	<p>A slow growing tumour on the optic nerve.</p>
Oral	<p>Having to do with the mouth.</p>
Orthopaedics	<p>A branch of medicine that specialises in the study and treatment of the skeletal system, its joints, muscles and associated structures (please check defn)</p>
Orthotist	<p>A skilled professional who fabricates orthotic devices that are prescribed by a physician.</p>
Otolaryngologist	<p>A doctor who specialises in treating diseases of the ear, nose and throat.</p>
Palliative	<p>Anything that serves to alleviate symptoms due to the underlying cancer but is not expected to cure it.</p>
Palliative care	<p>Active, holistic care of patients with advanced, progressive illness that may no longer be curable. The aim is to achieve the best quality of life for patients and their families. Many aspects of palliative care are also applicable in earlier stages of the cancer journey in association with other treatments.</p>
Papilloedema	<p>Swelling of the optic disc</p>
Pathologist	<p>A clinical doctor who studies disease processes by examining abnormal tissues and. The pathologist can tell where a cell comes from in the body and whether it is normal or a tumour cell. In a</p>

	hospital practically all the diagnostic tests performed with material removed from the body are evaluated or performed by a pathologist.
Pathology	A branch of medicine concerned with understanding disease processes, especially their functional effects on the body.
Patient pathway	A term used to denote the phases patients who are living with the consequences of cancer pass through, from the time they first suspect something might be wrong to beyond the end of treatment. It is dynamic and can be somewhat unpredictable. For some, the pathway will also include the time when cancer recurs and that leading up to the death of the patient.
Physiotherapist	A specialist trained in using exercise and physical activities to condition muscles and improve level of activity.
Pineal tumour	A tumour of the pineal body.
Pituitary tumour	A tumour of the pituitary gland.
Plastic surgeon	A doctor who specialises in surgery to correct damage to the skin. For example, reducing the amount of scarring or disfigurement that may happen because of surgery to treat a skin tumour.
Positron emission tomography (PET)	A highly specialised imaging technique using a radioactive tracer to produce a computerised image of body tissues to find any abnormalities. PET scans are sometimes used to help diagnose cancer and investigate a tumour's response to treatment. OR A highly specialised imaging technique using radioisotopes that is used to produce a computerised image of metabolic activity of body tissues.
Prognosis	A prediction of the likely outcome or course of a disease; the chance of recovery or recurrence.
Prognostic factor	Patient or disease characteristics, e.g. age or co-morbidity, which influence the course of the disease under study.
Protocol	An agreed policy that defines appropriate action.
Psychological	Adjective of psychology; which is the scientific study of behaviour and its related mental processes. Psychology is concerned with such matters as memory, rational and irrational thought, intelligence, learning, personality, perceptions and emotions and their relationship to behaviour.

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Psychologist	A specialist who can talk with patients and their families about emotional, cognitive and personal matters, and can help them make decisions.
Radiographer	A person who assists the radiologist in imaging (diagnostic radiographer) or the radiotherapist in treatment (therapeutic radiographer).
Radiologist	A doctor who specialises in creating and interpreting pictures of areas inside the body using X-rays and other specialised imaging techniques. An interventional radiologist specialises in the use of imaging techniques to assist treatment e.g. the insertion of intravenous catheters.
Radiology	The use of radiation (such as x-rays) or other imaging technologies (such as ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging) to diagnose or treat disease.
Radiosurgery	A radiation therapy technique that delivers radiation directly to the tumour while sparing the healthy tissue.
Radiotherapy (radiation treatment)	The use of radiation, usually x-rays or gamma rays, to kill cancer cells and treat tumours.
Randomised controlled trial (RCT)	A type of experiment that is used to compare the effectiveness of different treatments. The crucial feature of this form of trial is that patients are assigned at random to groups that receive the interventions being assessed or control treatments. Randomised controlled trials offer the most reliable (i.e. least biased) form of evidence of effectiveness.
Reconstructive surgery	Surgery that is done to reshape or rebuild (reconstruct) a part of the body changed by previous surgery.
Resection	To remove tissue from the body by surgery.
Retrospective study	A study which searches for a relationship between one (usually current) condition and another that occurred in the past.
Single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT)	A variation of computerised tomography (CT)
Specialist palliative care	Services in all sectors that specialise in palliative care and which include consultants in palliative medicine, clinical nurse specialists in palliative care and a range of other specialist expertise

Speech and language therapist	A specialist trained in the assessment and management of communication and swallowing difficulties.
Stereotactic	The precise 3D positioning of a surgical instrument or radiotherapy machine.
Supportive care	Care that helps the patient and their family and carers to cope with cancer and its treatment throughout the cancer journey, and in the case of the family and carers, into bereavement. It aims to help the patient maximise the benefits of treatment and provide the best possible quality of life.
Systematic review	A systematic review of the literature carried out in order to address a defined question and using quantitative methods to summarize the results.
Tertiary	Third level. Relating to medical treatment provided at a specialist institution.
Therapeutic radiographer	The role of the therapeutic radiographer is to work closely with other specialists, to deliver the radiotherapy as prescribed, to give patients information and support and to discuss possible side effects and care.
Toxicity	Refers to the undesirable and harmful side effects of a drug.
Trans-sphenoidal	Performed through the sphenoid bone, part of the base of the skull below the brain.
Tumour	A mass of excess tissue that results from abnormal cell division. Tumours perform no useful body function.
Unresectable	A tumour or mass which cannot be removed by surgery.
X-ray	A photographic or digital image of the internal organs or bones.

Appendix 7

List of Abbreviations

AHP	allied health professional
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
CME	continuing medical education
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
CNS	central nervous system
CPA	clinical pathology accreditation
CPD	continuing professional development
CSF	cerebrospinal fluid
CT	computed tomography
CTAAC	Clinical Trials Advisory and Awards Committee
DH	Department of Health
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
DOH	Department of Health
ENT	ear, nose and throat
EORTC	European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer
EQA	external quality assurance
ETP	electronic transmission of prescriptions
EUROCARE	European cancer registries study on cancer patients' survival and care
FTE	full-time equivalent
GCP	good clinical practice
GCTs	germ cell tumours
GDG	Guidance Development Group
GP	general practitioner
HDA	Health Development Agency
HES	Hospital Episodes Statistics
HGG	high grade glioma
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
ICD	International Classification of Diseases
IT	information technology
LGG	Low grade glioma
LHB	local health board

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MDT	multidisciplinary team
MR	magnetic resonance
MRI	magnetic resonance imaging
NATCANSAT	National Cancer Services Analysis Team
NCC-C	National Collaborating Centre for Cancer
NCIC-ONS	National Cancer Intelligence Centre at the Office for National Statistics
NCRI	National Cancer Research Institute
NCRN	National Cancer Research Network
NF1	neurofibromatosis type I
NF2	neurofibromatosis type II
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
NSF	National Service Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OT	occupational therapy
PCNSL	primary central nervous system lymphoma
PCT	primary care trust
PDP	personal development plan
PDT	photodynamic therapy
PEDW	Patient Episode Database in Wales
PEG	percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy
PET	positron emission tomography
PNET	primitive neuroectodermal tumor
R&D	research and development
RCGP	Royal College of General Practitioners
RCT	randomised controlled trial
SALT	speech and language therapy/ist
SHA	strategic health authority
SIGN	Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network
SPECT	single photon emission computed tomography
UK	United Kingdom
UKACR	United Kingdom Association of Cancer Registries
UKCCSG	United Kingdom Children's Cancer Study Group
UKCRC	United Kingdom Cancer Research Campaign
WBRT	whole brain radiotherapy
WHO	World Health Organization