



St George's Healthcare
NHS Trust



the station

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New technology saves lives

Oncology nurses highly commended at 2010 Excellence in Oncology Awards



LEADING LADIES: (l-r) Sonia Malik, Dr Darja Brandenburg and Lorraine Grover at the award ceremony

Congratulations to Barry Quinn, senior nurse for oncology and lead chemotherapy nurse and Lorraine Grover, urology research nurse who, along with Dr Darja Brandenburg, consultant clinical psychologist, and Sonia Malikwere, assistant clinical psychologist, both Pan Birmingham Cancer Service, were highly commended in the Best Patient Support Initiative in the oncology category at the 2010 Excellence in Oncology Awards.

The team was selected for its supportive booklet, *Intimacy and Sexuality for Cancer Patients and their Partners*. The booklet provides practical information for understanding and overcoming sexual difficulties after cancer.

Barry said: "The issue of addressing patients' sexual concerns secondary to disease and treatment is an area of clinical practice that is sometimes avoided by doctors and nurses who feel they lack the skills to address this sensitive area of care. The booklet which has been used widely in a number of cancer networks is aimed at supporting and guiding people with cancer who may have sexual concerns, it is also a helpful tool in supporting members of the cancer team to address the issue."



Pfizer Excellence in Oncology Awards 2010

Winners and Commendations

These Awards are organised
and funded by Pfizer Limited
in association with the British
Oncological Association (BOA)



Highly Commended: *Intimacy and Sexuality for Cancer Patients and their Partners*

Practical support booklet with tips and advice, by Dr Darja Brandenburg, Barry Quinn, Lorraine Grover and Sonia Malik

Team members:

Dr Darja Brandenburg, Lorraine Grover, Barry Quinn and Sonia Malik

Sexual dysfunction affects half of all cancer patients. With so many competing demands on limited NHS budgets, specific advice and help with sexual problems is rare. Most patients find that even small amounts of advice and acknowledgement can

help address these issues, yet existing resources lacked open, practical advice and pointers to available support.



Sonia Malik and Dr Darja Brandenburg

To address the deficit, a multidisciplinary group of clinicians with a shared interest in the topics of intimacy and sexuality joined forces to write a booklet that would enable cancer patients and their partners to recover from sexual problems arising from cancer and cancer treatments. Topics covered include: the sexual response cycle and cancer; sexual side effects of cancer treatments; and practical tips on overcoming sexual problems.

Drafts were reviewed by patients and their partners, healthcare professionals and even members of the general public.

The final version underwent formal evaluation through postal questionnaire, receiving an overwhelmingly positive response. It has achieved wide distribution both directly and via word-of-mouth, across the NHS, in primary and secondary care and community settings.

What the judges said:

"This is a very close second in this category; it's exactly what is needed. For so many doctors, it's a sensitive and awkward subject that is hopelessly addressed or ignored by many clinicians. This booklet answers the tough questions that are difficult to answer."

