

**Mid Argyll Chemotherapy Service Development**  
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A Chemotherapy Service Development Group comprising managers and clinicians from Argyll and Bute CHP and The Beatson Oncology Centre have been established and been meeting for the past two years to oversee the development of a local chemotherapy service to be based in MACHICC.

A Health Department Letter (HDL) issued in March 2005 titled Guidance for the Safe Use of Cytotoxic Chemotherapy has provided the framework for the group to develop the safe local service which includes prescribing, verification, dispensing, administration, storage, transport and disposal of cytotoxic drugs.

Chemotherapy awareness training has been provided for all domestic and nursing staff based in MACHICC along with the identified GP and pharmacy leads. Staff Nurses Joan McRoberts and Shirley Kirk, who will be providing the service, have undertaken the chemotherapy training course based at the Beatson and spent time in Lorn and Islands Hospital becoming familiar with the protocols supporting the local chemotherapy service based in Oban. Staff Nurses McRoberts and Kirk have also undertaken a significant amount of work to develop local protocols and procedures to ensure compliance with the HDL and put in place safe operating systems.

Awareness raising through the local Public Partnership Forum and Cancer Support Group have ensured local enthusiasm and support for the service development, which has included fund raising by local individuals and groups.

On the advice of the senior clinicians based at the Beatson Oncology Centre, the initial plan is for a limited number of treatment regimens to be delivered in MACHICC. As the service develops the list of available treatments will be reviewed by clinicians. It will always be the Consultant Oncologists decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for a patient to receive their treatment locally.

Chemotherapy will initially be administered to patients in one of the single rooms based in Glenaray ward. Partnership working with MacMillan Cancer Relief is enabling the local management team to progress converting a room within Glenaray ward into a dedicated chemotherapy suite. A MacMillan architect has visited MACHICC and drawings are currently being developed to progress this. The proposed timescale for developing the chemotherapy suit is currently under discussion with MacMillan and it is dependant upon various funding streams, however it is hoped that the renovations will be completed early in 2012.

The next meeting of the Chemotherapy Service Development Group will take place on 20<sup>th</sup> April, when the aim is to identify a start date for the chemotherapy service in May or June 2011.