

# Macmillan Primary Care Cancer Education Project, Cheshire and Merseyside

## Key findings of the Non-Clinical Staff survey conducted in Jan/Feb 2020

Many thanks for participating in the Macmillan Primary Care Cancer Education Project survey. At your request, we have summarised the findings and our next steps.

### Background

Cancer remains a major cause of death according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) and will result in 12 million deaths by 2030 (WHO, 2011). According to the *Independent Cancer Taskforce report (2015)*, all NHS staff who come into contact with cancer patients have a responsibility to ensure that every conversation they have with a patient delivers the information and support required. The report further indicated that all NHS Staff (including non-clinical staff) who have contact with people affected by cancer should have access to appropriate learning and development opportunities in order to provide adequate support and care to patients throughout their cancer journey.

In 2017, a survey on cancer care in primary care was conducted among primary care staff in Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M) and cancer education was highlighted as a key area to enable colleagues to provide optimal support for their patients. Currently, cancer education to primary care staff across Cheshire and Merseyside is delivered in a variety of ways, with easier access in some areas more than others indicating the need for equal and consistent access to cancer education in the area.

Furthermore, in line with the recently published *NHS long-term plan (2019)* and its ambition to increase the proportion of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 from half to three-quarters by 2028, one of the key actions being developed locally (with CCGs, STPs, Cancer Alliances, HEE, Primary Care Networks) in achieving the ambition is the development of competency-based training and educational programmes for cancer teams and the health workforce across C&M.

The Macmillan Primary Care Cancer Education Project is being undertaken to explore the feasibility of setting up a Primary Care Cancer Education Repository at The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre.

### Objectives of the survey

The Primary Care non-clinical staff survey was undertaken to assess:

- Access to cancer education for the Primary Care workforce;
- Barriers to accessing cancer education resources;
- Gaps in knowledge, awareness, skills and confidence of primary care workforce in the provision of care and support to cancer patients;
- Possible options to improve access to a more standardised, relevant and up to date cancer education resources for primary care workforce across Cheshire and Merseyside.

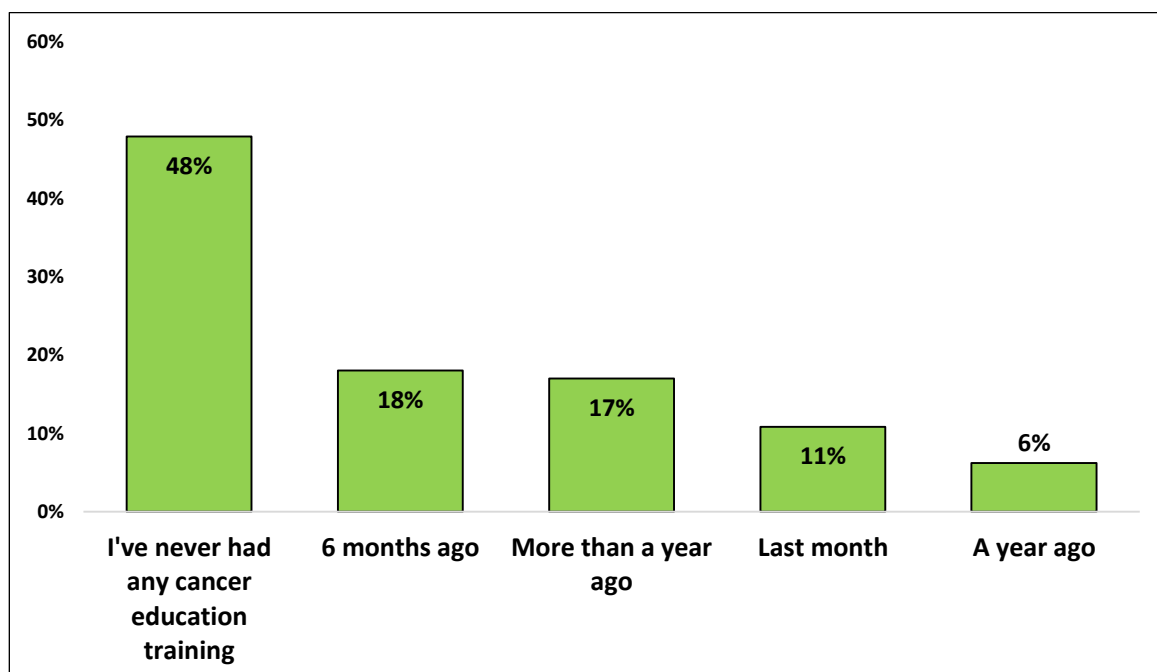
## Methods

A web-based survey (generated via survey monkey) was disseminated to non-clinical staff in GP Practices across C&M. Practice Managers, Training Hub Leads, CRUK facilitators and Macmillan GP advisors across C&M assisted with survey dissemination. Survey responses were collected between 14<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Two hundred and thirteen (213) responses were obtained.

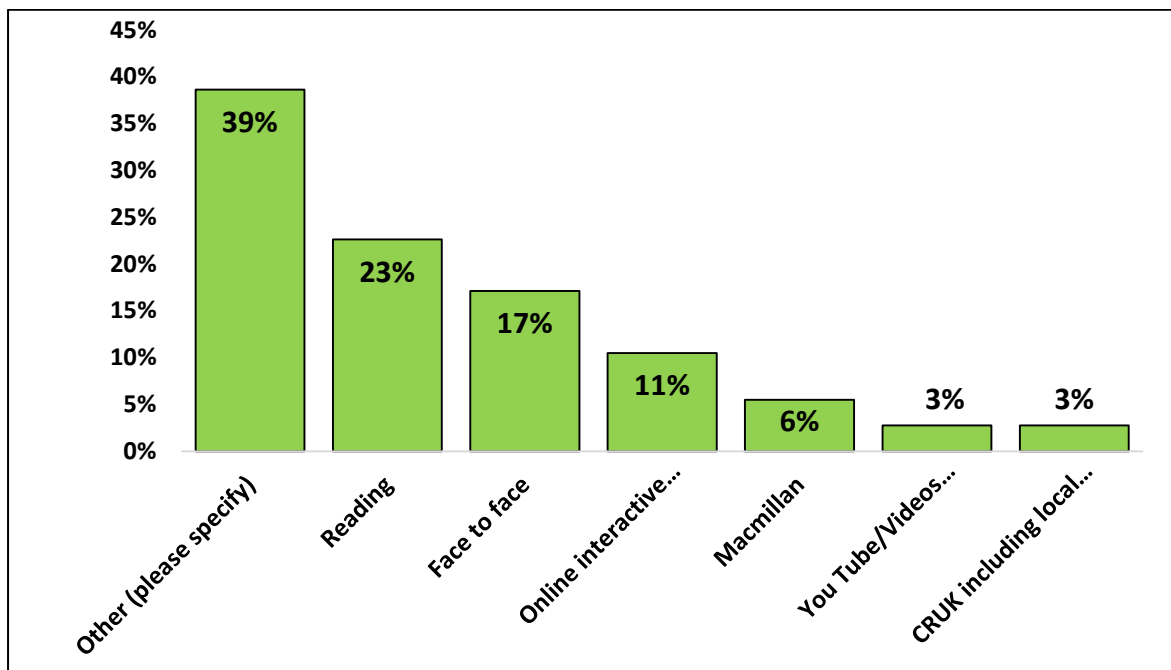
## Findings

- 213 colleagues completed the survey across Cheshire and Merseyside.
- The majority of respondents were Receptionists & Clerical staff (**49%**)
- **61%** have worked for 5+ years in their current surgery
- Almost half (48%) of the participants have never had any form of cancer education training (**Fig. 1**).
- The majority (39%) of participants had accessed 'other' resources (previous roles, GSF Training, through the Practice or CCG )in the past 12 months for cancer education as well as reading (23%) and attending any face to face events(17%) (**Fig.2**).
- Barriers to access cancer education included that they had never been offered training and a lack of awareness to education available.
- Most participants prefer face-to-face learning followed by online interactive learning (**Fig 3**).
- Participants mostly indicated that they obtain their information about cancer education through their CCG.
- Assessment of gaps in cancer education revealed that slightly over half of the participants either disagreed or were unsure of their knowledge of cancer epidemiology, support services available, signposting patients and coping strategies and therapies for cancer patients and in communicating effectively with a person affected by cancer and issues surrounding their illness.
- The areas that colleagues suggested they would need support with education were support available (for patients/families/carers), information on every aspect of cancer care, treatments (including side effects), how to communicate with those affected by cancer and signposting.

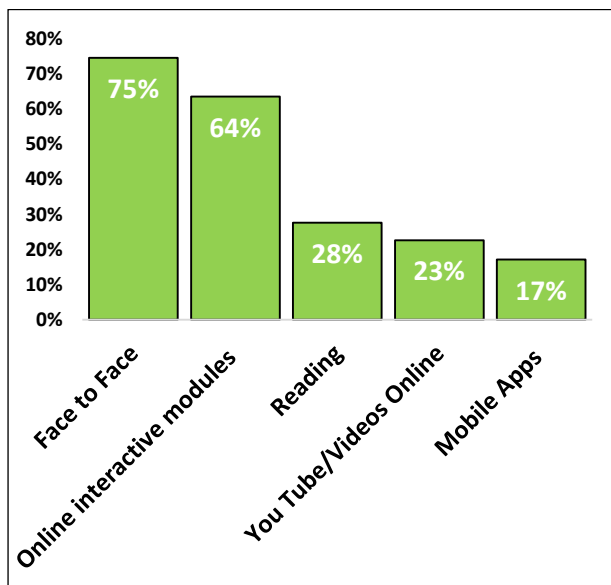
**Fig. 1 – Last time Non-Clinical Staff had any form of cancer education training**



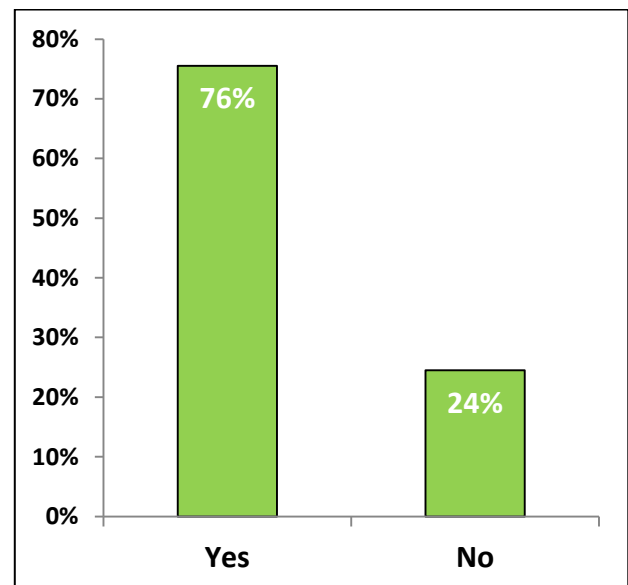
**Fig. 2 Resources accessed over the past 12 months for cancer education**



**Fig. 3 – Preferred method of learning**



**Fig.4 – Provision of an online repository**



**Fig.5 – Word cloud below highlighting suggestions and ideas of participants on the online cancer education repository**



## Conclusion

This primary care non-clinical staff survey has revealed a huge need for a structured cancer education programme for this group across Cheshire and Merseyside. Whilst almost 40% of primary care non-clinical staff that took part in the survey indicated that cancer education was relevant to their profession, a higher proportion (48%) have not had any form of cancer education. For those that have, survey revealed that they accessed some forms of cancer education via online resources, reading and attending face-to-face sessions.

There was a clear expression of interest in the provision of an online cancer repository in Cheshire and Merseyside as indicated by 76% of participants (**Fig.4**). Most participants commented that the cancer education online repository should be easy to access and simplified, provide training for all Primary Care staff, signpost staff and patients, and include contact lists of available support services (**Fig.5**). Cancer education topic areas where a higher proportion of participants either lacked knowledge of or were unsure of their level of knowledge / confidence was in cancer epidemiology, communication with patients/ families about issues surrounding their cancer, sourcing cancer information, available cancer support and coping strategies that can be useful to patients.

## Next steps

This primary care non-clinical staff survey is the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the series of primary care surveys conducted for this project- GPs/ ANPs and PNs/HCAs surveys have also been undertaken. With the support of Macmillan Cancer Support funding, the findings of the surveys will serve as evidence required for developing a strategy for setting up Primary Care Cancer Education Repository at Clatterbridge Cancer Centre for easier access to cancer education resources, coordination and delivery of cancer education and for advertising national and local education materials and information.

The Project Team will:

1. Continue with the scoping exercise and evidence gathering required for decision-making on the provision on an online cancer education repository.
2. Compile a Primary Care Cancer Education Strategy for Cheshire and Merseyside.

**If you would like more information about the survey or are interested in supporting the project, please contact:**

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