

REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE


Version Number	V1
Date of Issue	JULY 2016
Reference Number	RSLR-07-2016-V1
Review Interval	3 yearly
Approved By Name: Fionnuala O'Neill Title: Nurse Practice Coordinator	Signature: <i>Fionnuala O'Neill.</i> Date: Dec 2016
Authorised By Name: Frieda Clinton ANP (Oncology) Title: Advanced Nurse Practitioner	Signature: <i>Frieda Clinton</i> Date: Dec 2016
Author/s	Name: Teresa Slevin Title: CNMIII – Haem-Oncology Day Unit.
Location of Copies	On Hospital Intranet and locally in department

Document Review History

Review Date	Reviewed By	Signature
2019		


Document Change History

Change to Document	Reason for Change

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin		
Document Name: REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE		
Reference Number: RSLR-07-2016-V1	Version Number: V1	
Date of Issue: July 2016	Page 2 of 6	

CONTENTS

		Page Number
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Objective of this policy	3
3.0	Responsibilities of Personnel	3
4.0	Procedure	3
5.0	Emergency Review	5
6.0	Prevention & Control of Hospital Acquired Infection	5
7.0	Completion of Treatment and Follow Up	5
8.0	Non Conformances	6
9.0	References	6

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin		
Document Name: REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE		
Reference Number: RSLR-07-2016-V1	Version Number: V1	
Date of Issue: July 2016	Page 3 of 6	

1.0 Introduction

Radiotherapy treats cancer by using high energy rays to kill cancer cells in a particular part of the body while doing as little harm as possible to the normal cells. Radiotherapy treatment is administered in St. Luke's hospital (SLH), Rathgar, Dublin for the children attending Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin, (OLCHC). Patients may be referred to other radiotherapy centres such as St. James Hospital.

Types of radiotherapy treatments available in St. Luke's

- Focal
- Craniospinal
- Boost
- Total Body Irradiation (TBI) - See planning of TBI SOP (CP-HSCT-TBI)

2.0 Objective of this policy

The objective of this policy is to ensure the safe and effective management of all children and teenagers referred to St. Luke's Hospital.


3.0 Responsibilities of Personnel

The patient's consultant will send a letter of referral for radiotherapy treatment to the Consultant Radiation oncologist in St. Luke's with a follow up phone call.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Referral process


- The Consultant will refer the child directly to the radiation oncologist by letter and a follow up phone call
- If the patient has any infection causes, this is also included in the referral letter
- An appointment is made for the family to meet the radiation oncologist in the clinic in out- patients in OLCHC or in St. Luke's to discuss the radiotherapy treatment/side effects in detail. If the child is an inpatient on St. John's ward the radiation oncologist and a nurse from St. Luke's hospital will see the child in St. John's ward.
- Following on from this appointment, the radiation oncologist arranges for the patient to commence the planning process for radiotherapy in St. Luke's. The planning is now all completed in one day and it involves having a mask made, scans and a simulation of treatment prior to commencing radiotherapy.
- Treatment will be every weekday. Monday – Friday, excluding bank holidays. The number of radiotherapy sessions depends on the treatment prescribed and the child's protocol. Radical radiotherapy can be up to 40 sessions and palliative treatment can be a single session.

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin		
Document Name: REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE		
Reference Number: RSLR-07-2016-V1	Version Number: V1	
Date of Issue: July 2016	Page 4 of 6	

- When the patient commences radiotherapy, the staff in St. Luke's contact the patient/family with the proposed start date of their radiotherapy treatment. Each day the patient/family are informed of the time of their treatment for the next day.
- If an inpatient in OLCHC the family will inform the ward staff the time of the next appointment and the necessary arrangements are put in place i.e. transport, escort.
- Prior to attending St. Lukes Hospital (SLH) if the child /teenager is an inpatient he/she must be reviewed by the oncology team and deemed fit to attend radiotherapy.
- The ANP in Oncology contacts the CNM 2 from St. Luke's Hospital on a weekly basis via email to confirm the current list of patients receiving radiotherapy with their proposed start and end dates of treatment.
- The ANP in Oncology informs the oncology consultants/team by email of this list.

4.2 General Anesthetic Required

- If a child requires a general anaesthetic, the anaesthetists from OLCHC are responsible for the anaesthetic of these patients. The anaesthetist will contact the CNM in St. Luke's and arrange the time of the radiotherapy sessions. If child anaesthetised, he/she will be recovered in St. Luke's and discharged home once fully recovered or transferred back to OLCHC if an inpatient.
- St. Luke's staff will contact the Play specialist in St. John's if they think the child will require some preparation for radiotherapy without needing an anesthetic.
- The play specialist will meet the family and child/teenager in OLCHC/SLH and prepares and explains the procedure.
- Children of four years and upwards will generally have radiotherapy without anaesthetic, depending on their age, stage of development, duration of radiotherapy and site of radiotherapy i.e.(mask).
- The Play specialist will have completed prior preparation with the child/young person prior to meeting in St. Luke's to assess if the child is suitable to have radiotherapy without anaesthetic.
- The play specialist will arrange with SLH staff and meet the family in St. Luke's on their planning day and go through the procedure.
- The family have a full induction to St. Luke's and are shown the radiotherapy room, and allowed to practice speaking through the intercom outside the treatment room.
- A sticker chart is used to count the number of radiotherapy treatments. Sticker charts are given for every day of treatment and they are rewarded on their first day and then again at the end of treatment by the radiation therapists.

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin		
Document Name: REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE		
Reference Number: RSLR-07-2016-V1	Version Number: V1	
Date of Issue: July 2016	Page 5 of 6	

- The day the child/young person is due to begin radiotherapy the play specialist meet the child and family, reiterates & support the child through the procedure.
- The child chooses stories to read and music to listen to while they are in the radiotherapy room.
- If the child requires reassurance during treatment the play specialist will attend the session.
- If there are any problems/concerns regarding inpatients suitability on any given day for anaesthetic, they must be reviewed by an anaesthetist in OLCHC before transfer over to SLH for treatment.

4.3 Accommodation

Treatment is usually as an outpatient to St. Luke's. If the child and family are from outside Dublin and require accommodation OLCHC will provide, e.g. Ronald McDonald house or home from home. The family or the assigned social worker book the accommodation via the accommodation officer in OLCHC.

4.4 Transport to St. Luke's

- If the child requires transport to St. Luke's from OLCHC, OLCHC will arrange taxi transfer.
- If child is an inpatient, the family may transfer by car if their child is clinically well or taxi, or with OLCHC staff by ambulance if clinically indicated.

5.0 Emergency Review


- If child becomes unwell or requires any supportive treatment when attending St. Luke's the staff in St. Luke's contacts the child's team in OLCHC. Refer to OLCHC admission & discharge policy.
- If the child unwell and requires transfer to OLCHC or another hospital if required e.g. temple street following discussion with the child's team in OLCHC, St. Luke's will arrange transfer.
- For supportive treatment e.g. blood transfusion St. Luke's will contact OLCHC HODU to arrange same.

6.0 Prevention & Control of Hospital Acquired Infection

- Referring team is responsible for informing St. Luke's Nursing unit regarding infection status of the child and specific requirements the child may have. Refer to OLCHC infection control policy, OLCHC admission and discharge policy.

7.0 Completion of Treatment and Follow Up

When the patient has completed his/her radiotherapy treatment the radiation oncologist sends a treatment summary letter to the respective consultant in Crumlin. This letter is filed in the child's health care record in OLCHC.

Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin		
Document Name: REFERRAL TO ST. LUKES FOR RADIOTHERAPY GUIDELINE		
Reference Number: RSLR-07-2016-V1	Version Number: V1	
Date of Issue: July 2016	Page 6 of 6	

8.0 Non Conformances

9.0 References

- Planning of total body irradiation SOP 2015, – OLCHC, CP-HSCT- TBI
- Admission & Discharge policy OLCHC, 2010.
- Infection Control Policy OLCHC.

Contact Numbers

St. Luke's Radiotherapy Department

Central Booking Office

Phone No: 01 420 6945

Nurse's station: 01 406 5283 / Bleep 249

Haematology / Oncology Day Unit

OLCHC

Phone No: 01 409 6649

St. John's Ward

OLCHC

01 409 6660 /

6654 or 01 455 4176

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