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## Patient Care & Support Guideline



Patient Care & Support Programme Guideline

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Bhutan Cancer Society

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## Table of Contents

1. Interpretations
2. Preamble
3. Chapter 1: Name & Extent
4. Chapter 2: General Beneficiary
5. Chapter 3: General Objectives
6. Chapter 4: General Support Rules & Approach
7. Chapter 5: Support during treatment with in Bhutan
  - 5.1.1 Support Area & Approach
  - 5.1.2 Transportation
  - 5.1.3 Accommodations & Essential items
  - 5.1.4 Nutritional Support
  - 5.1.5 Other Essential Support
8. Chapter 6: Support during treatment/follow-up outside Bhutan
  - 6.1 Support Criteria and Approach
9. Chapter 7 : Counseling Services
  - 7.1 Program and Approach
10. Chapter 8: Livelihood Programme
  - 8.1 Program and Approach
11. Chapter 9: Commiseration (Bereavement Support)
11. Chapter 10: Support during unpredicted events
11. Chapter 11: Amendment Procedure

Annexure

**Interpretations**

In this guideline, the following terms mean:

1. "Society" shall mean the Bhutan Cancer Society (BCS).
2. "Chairperson" shall mean the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Society.
3. "Board" shall mean the Board of Directors of the Society.
4. "Executive Director" shall mean the Executive Director of the Society.
5. "Employees" shall mean the employees of the Society.
6. "Government" shall mean the Royal Government of Bhutan.
7. "the Articles" means the Articles of Association of the Bhutan Cancer Society.
8. "Policy" means the Guidelines of this document.
9. "Approving Committee" means the committee assigned to approve support to clients.
10. "the Law" means the law of Bhutan applicable to Civil Society Organizations and companies including statutory modification or re-enactment thereof for the time being in force.
11. "the Memorandum" means the Society's Memorandum of Association;
12. "Office" means the registered office of the Society.
13. "the Seal" means the common seal of Society.
14. "Client" means the beneficiary of the Society.

Terms signifying masculine gender shall include the feminine gender as well.

**Preamble**

The Bhutan Cancer Society's "Patient Care & Support Guideline" is a policy document framed to ensure a fair, effective, transparent, and clear support system for individuals and families infected and affected by Cancer-related diseases.

Adopted by the Board of Director of the Society during 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 to be effective from the date of its endorsement, it shall be used as a reference for all matters relating to support and services from the Society to its clients.

The key purpose of this guideline is to ensure that the support structure is implemented properly to maintain uniformity and consistency.

The guideline extracted its basis through random consultation and need assessment conducted from patient profiling. The guideline development team included:

- Nine members of the Board of Directors;
- Four staff from the Society Secretariat;
- Two survivors;
- One Onco and palliative care nurse;

This guideline is a dynamic document and shall therefore be altered and amended by the Society's Board of Directors, from time to time reflect the needs and demands of changing environment and best practices.

**Background**

Bhutan Cancer Society (BCS) is a Public Benefit Organization registered under the Civil Society Organizations Authority. Bhutan Cancer Society was founded by Health Minister Dasho Dechen Wangmo, a Public Health Specialist, and Dr. Ugyen Tshomo, a Gynae-oncologist with at Jigme Dorji Wangchuck National Referral Hospital, Thimphu. BCS is the only non-profit organization established for the benefit of the cancer patient, caregiver, and general population in Bhutan.

We primarily work under the three major pillars: Care and Support for cancer patients and caregivers; Cancer Prevention and Advocacy and Cancer Research. We provide palliative care to the patient as well as the caregiver beginning at diagnosis and continuing through treatment, follow-up and the end of life. We also support the cancer patient financially which includes transportation allowance and basic amenities on a need basis.

### **Chapter 1: Name & Extent**

The name of the policy shall be called "Patient Support Guideline".

The guideline shall apply to all matters concerning the support and services to BCS' Patients<sup>11</sup> and their caregiver.

### **Chapter 2: General Beneficiary**

The support and services shall be extended to Bhutanese diagnosed and affected by cancer-based on the case identification and beneficiary classification.

2.1 The support under this area shall be applied to the following clients based on need assessment:

- i. Cancer Patient on active treatment
- ii. Cancer Patient on follow-up and
- iii. Cancer patient under palliative care

2.2 Those beneficiaries receiving support from other sources shall not be eligible for additional financial support.

2.3 Cases beyond the scope of BCS may be referred to relevant agencies, CSOs and others.

### **Chapter 3: General Objectives**

- i. To ease the financial burden of patient or affected families during treatments.
- ii. To facilitate quick and easy access for timely treatment.
- iii. To provide nutritional supplements and other related expenses of cancer clients are supported on a need basis.
- iv. To provide psycho-social support for both the patient and caregiver.
- v. To empower cancer patient with relevant skills to engage in at least one meaningful economic activity.

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<sup>11</sup> Individuals and families diagnosed and affected by cancer including patient on palliative care identified based on need assessment conducted by BCS

## Chapter 4: General Support Rules & Approach

All the support under this system shall apply the following basic formalities:

- 4.1. The support shall be extended to only those who seek Society's intervention and request for assistance.
- 4.2. All request for support shall be proposed directly by the client or recommended by the In-charges of respective Oncology Ward, Palliative Care, and patient navigators to the Society.
- 4.3. The BCS's Approving Committee shall conduct an assessment on the support apprised through "Patient Support Requisition Form" annexed in this guideline as **Appendix 2; The committee shall comprise of the Executive Director, Finance Officer and Program Officer.**
- 4.4. The beneficiary classification shall be determined based on the applicant's financial status assessed from income and expenditure detail declared in **Appendix 3.**
- 4.5. In absence of support approached using the prescribed forms, any request for support shall be evidenced with application from the client or any other record of communication through social media, medical reports, and other relevant documents.
- 4.6. The Society may conduct an external survey or field visit at the applicant's residence if deemed necessary, to authenticate that the support apprised is genuine.
- 4.7. The Society, if necessary shall consult with the person in charge of Kidu Guest House or Nurse Incharge of Oncology Ward and Palliative Unit before approving support at the Patient.

## Chapter 5: Support during treatment with in Bhutan

The areas of support outlined below are integrated based on the need assessed and basic support required for the clients.

BCS shall arrange accommodation, transportation and other support to cancer patients based on a needs assessment.

The actual expenses incurred on transportation, food, and accommodation during travel between places for treatment shall be extended to both the patient and caregiver based on need assessment.

### 5.1.1 Support Area & Approach

All request for support shall be proposed directly by the patient or referred by the incharges Oncology Ward, Palliative Unit and patient navigators from respective regional hospitals.

The criteria and category to extend support to the patient is annexed in this guideline as **Appendix 1**.

### **5.1.2 Transportation**

BCS shall provide transportation to and fro from treatment/ follow-up at Oncology Ward for BCS clients based on need assessments.

- i. Patient qualifying to receive such services shall be supported with actual Bus/Taxi fare and fuel expenses for two ways from home to hospital for chemotherapy, radiotherapy and other medical appointments.
- ii. The Society may explore other alternatives and arrange transportation for patient commuting from other/near by Dzongkhags.
- iii. The Society may deploy its pool vehicles for such services depending on the availability of facilities.
- iv. The support under this area shall be extended only to cancer Patient and a caregiver. An additional caregiver may be supported based on the severity of the case.
- v. To ensure timely support, the patient and/or caregiver must inform BCS Secretariat a week in advance of the scheduled cancer treatment and follow-up.

### **5.1.3 Accommodations and Essential items**

BCS shall coordinate with Kidu Guest House and others to facilitate accommodations for cancer patient from the financially marginalized background and are without alternative shelter while undergoing cancer treatment.

- i. Item no.6 listed in Table 1 may be given on a returnable basis upon recommendation made by the In-charges of respective Patient Guest Houses.
- ii. The items shall be issued ensuring proper record maintenance in the stock register by assigning proper identification code to be retained as BCS property and reissued to the new patient.
- iii. The support under this area shall be extended only to Cancer Patient moving into Patient Guest Houses.



#### 5.1.4 Nutritional support

- i. The Society will organize the supply of nutrition once in every two months to cancer patient residing at the Patient Guest Houses.
- ii. Supply of nutrition for identified cancer patient residing on rent with relatives or friends will be arranged together with the supply scheduled for Patient Guest Houses.

Table 1: *Item list for support*

Sl.No.	Supply Item and specifications	Quantity per patient	Remarks
1.	Rice(raw and boiled)	25 kg	Regular Supply
2.	Cooking Oil-refined	1ltr	
3.	Egg	1 dozen	
4.	Onion,chillies and any three varieties of vegetables		
5.	Toiletries		To be included in the regular supply
Note * support not exceeding Nu 3,000 per supply.			
6.	Kitchen Appliances (rice cooker, curry cooker, plates and bowls)		For a patient in need during his/her first admission to a Guest House.

#### 5.1.5 Other essential supports

BCS shall strive to provide the necessary support to help patient manage symptoms and improve quality of life. Such support shall not exceed more than Nu. 2500/- (such as adult diapers, sanitary pads, etc...)

### Chapter 6: Support during Treatment/follow-up outside Bhutan.

The Society shall examine the application received and qualify the applicant under one of the beneficiary classifications. The following package of support shall be applied:

- i. Patient applying for support from the Society for medical review shall be provided one-time support up to Nu.5,000/- upon need assessment and criteria under **Annexure 1**.

- ii. Patient undergoing/completed review privately without prior information/notice to BCS shall not be admissible for the above support.

## **6.1 Support Criteria and Approach**

Under the area of support system, the following processes shall be applied:

- i. The applicant must submit the duly filled "Patient Support Requisition Form" **annexed to this guideline as Appendix 1.**
- ii. Declare income and expenditure detail annexed to the patient support requisition form for assessment.

## **Chapter 7: Counseling Services**

Recognizing the importance and benefits of counseling, BCS is committed for counseling services available to its patient and caregivers to help the them cope with with diagnosis. BCS counselors would be guided by counseling guidelines while providing services.

## **7.1 Program and Approach**

The activities under this area shall include but not limited to:

- i. Counseling session
- ii. Pilgrimages
- iii. Picnics and Excursions
- iv. Retreats

Any of the activities above shall be properly planned, budgeted, and coordinated by the Society on the identification of special occasions or days.

The Society shall support program expenditure incurred for common use and consumption. However, expenditure by individuals for personal use shall not be covered.

## **Chapter 8: Livelihood Programme**

Cancer patients and their caregivers encounter numerous difficulties right from awareness, accessibility, treatments to post-treatment management. Families with meager incomes are affected mostly with affordability issues to travel to hospital, meeting day's end at the time of treatment, and revitalize their livelihoods. As a result, their burden and stress multiply.

BCS recognizes this support area as a crucial activity to provide a platform for skill development for income generation and sustainability.

### **8.1 Program and Approach**

- i. The Society shall facilitate arranging either raw materials or seed funds for those beneficiaries interested in income generation activities.
- ii. The Society shall explore and support suitable training, if required, for interested beneficiaries.
- iii. The Society may help market the products produced through this support or buy them to sell or give away as souvenirs to BSC's supporters.
- iv. The Society shall collaborate with relevant CSOs and agencies to facilitate livelihood program for beneficiaries

## **Chapter 9: Commiseration (Bereavement Support)**

In the event of the death of a client, Society shall provide a modest sum of Nu. 3000/- to closest family member responsible for final rites.

## **Chapter 10: Support during unpredicted events**

In an unforeseen event, the Society may extend support to its clients depending on the nature of support required.

However, support extended on such matters should not exceed Nu. 5000/- per month and must be evidenced with proper justification from the approving committee or person who recommended the support.

## **Chapter 11: Amendment procedure**

The right to amend any provision of this guideline shall be vested with Board of

Directors of Society upon recommendation from Secretariat.

### Appendix 1: Beneficiary Category

Beneficiary Classification	Support Admissible	Criteria
Beneficiary A	100% of the Actual Support	✓ Family's monthly income below Nu. 15,000/-.
Beneficiary B	75% of the Actual Support	✓ Family's monthly income between Nu. 15,000/- to Nu. 20,000/-
Beneficiary C	50% of the Actual Support	✓ Family's monthly income between Nu. 20,000/- to Nu. 25,000/-.
Beneficiary D	25% of the Actual Support	✓ Family's monthly income between Nu. 25,000/- to Nu. 30,000/-.
Beneficiary E	15% of the Actual Support	✓ Family's monthly income above Nu. 30,000/-

### Note:

1. Income should include income from salary, rent, business, and any other dealings.
2. Income should include the income of immediate caregiver like spouses, children, and parents of the beneficiary living under same household.
3. Treatment within Bhutan we will pay Nu. 3000/- and for outside Bhutan Nu. 5000/- based on one time expenditure.

## Appendix 2: Patient Support Requisition Form

Requisition Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Patient's Detail												
Name	Contact No.											
Present Address (Fill the form annexed if applicable)	Occupation/Source of Income											
Treatment status	Diagnosis/ Name of Oncologist											
2. Attendant's/Caregiver's Detail												
Name of Attendant/Caregiver	Contact No.											
Relation to Patient												
3. Support Appraisal												
<b>Support Request</b>	<i>Please specify the support requested:</i>											
<b>Applicant:</b> _____ (Sign, date & detail of Patient/Attendant)												
4. For BCS Use/Appraisal												
Remarks/Comment on application reviewed: ..... ..... Application reviewed by Approving Committee dated ...../...../.....												
<b>Application Approved for Beneficiary Category</b>		<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <tr><td>A</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>D</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>E</td><td></td></tr> </table>	A		B		C		D		E	
A												
B												
C												
D												
E												
1. _____	2. _____	3. _____										

### Important Note/Condition:

1. Submit supporting document (Oncology Record) of Patient availing the support.
2. Provide income detail at Declaration of Income Detail form to determine the genuineness of request.
3. Declaration of false information will result in rejection/discontinuation of support.

4. The BCS reserves the right to decide the beneficiary category through assessment as per its policy "Patient Care & Support Guidelines".

### Appendix 3: Declaration of Income & Expenditure Detail

#### A. Income Detail

- i. If the applicant is not earning, remark as NA at the space provided: \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. If the applicant is earning, provide the income detail below.

Sl. No	Source of Income	Category/Type (Specify)	Monthly Income (in Nu.)		Remarks
			Patient	Spouse/ Caregiver	
1.	Salary				
2.	Business (Includes income from cash crops)				
3.	Rental				
4.	Home-Based/Online Business				
5.	Others - Running Taxi - Support from Well-wishers				

#### B. Expenditure

Provide the detail of expenditure on household and others.

Sl. No	Expenditure Areas	Monthly Expenditure (in Nu.)		Remarks
		Patient	Spouse/ Dependent	
1.	Rental: - House : - Business :			
2.	Utility (Electricity + Water)			
3.	Loan/Liabilities (If any, evidence with supporting documents)			
4.	Expenditure on Children's Education			

#### Declaration

I, hereby declare that the information provided above are correct and the support requested is genuine. I agree that BCS has the total right to decide my entitlement and I shall remain content with the decision made by the BCS.

I have fully read and understood the conditions laid on the requisition form and authorizes the BCS to validate it through any means of verification and make references and enquires relating to information in this application.

For BCS Use:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature, name & date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Witness)

Signature, Name & Contact No.

Email : [bhutancancer15@gmail.com](mailto:bhutancancer15@gmail.com)  
Website : [www.bhutancancersociety.org.com](http://www.bhutancancersociety.org.com)  
Face book : @Bhutan Cancer Society  
Post Box No. : opposite to NPPF building  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor.  
Contact : +975-02-339174/17815811