CANCER OLDER PEOPLES SERVICE

COPS CHRONICLE

NOVEMBER 2026 - ISSUE 31

WHAT'S NEW



💚 Outstanding Care – Thank You!

We're delighted to share that the **COPS Occupational Therapy Service Design Project** won the Outstanding Care Award at the NHSGGC Celebrating Success Staff Awards on 30 October 2026! This award recognises our innovative, multidisciplinary approach to improving care, independence and quality of life for older adults living with cancer. We're incredibly proud of this achievement and grateful to everyone who has supported the development of COPS!

📽️ **Watch our COPS service video HERE.**

🏆 **Read about the award winners HERE.**

🎅 Be a Santa to a Senior Returns!

COPS will once again support Home Instead's Christmas gift drive! We'll be collecting donations throughout November & December - full details soon

🏆 Scotland's Health Awards 2026

We're delighted to share that Carly Rolston has been shortlisted as a finalist for the **Allied Health Professional Award at the upcoming Scotland's Health Awards 2026!** A fantastic recognition of her dedication to improving care for older adults living with cancer. Fingers crossed! 🤞💚

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CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST: TRACY DOWNEY

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST: CARLY ROLSTON

💡 TOPIC OF THE MONTH: FROM VISION TO IMPACT - MAKING CGA COUNT

This November, we're reflecting on the International Society of Geriatric Oncology (SIOG) Annual Conference 2026, held in Valencia, Spain, from 5–7 November. Under the theme "A Global Call to Action: From Vision to Impact in Geriatric Oncology", the conference brought together international experts to explore how multidisciplinary working and innovation can improve care for older adults living with cancer. COPS OT Carly and CNS Tracy Downey attended and presented our work, **Embedding Occupational Therapy Within a Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (CGA) Oncology Service: Early Outcomes from a Scottish Regional Cancer Centre.** Our poster was one of five selected for oral presentation during the SIOG Nursing, Allied Health and Scientists Poster Walk, sharing our early service-evaluation findings with an international audience.

One of the strongest messages from the conference was that CGA must lead to action, not simply assessment. The Young SIOG session, How to Improve the Delivery and Impact of CGA in Clinical Practice, explored how assessment findings can inform treatment decisions, support toxicity prevention and strengthen collaboration between oncology and geriatrics, while keeping patients' priorities central to care. This closely reflects our approach within COPS. Our poster presented early findings from ***152 older adults attending 228 outpatient appointments, during which 835 OT interventions were recorded.*** These included patient education, collaborative referrals, symptom management, ADL interventions, emotional support and equipment provision. Notably, 59% of interventions were classified as Level 4 complexity, highlighting the breadth of needs being addressed. Our preliminary hospital utilisation analysis also identified fewer admissions and a lower average length of stay in a 67-patient subgroup when comparing six months before and after COPS involvement. While encouraging, causality cannot be established, and further evaluation is required.

Another relevant session, Network-Based Approaches to Improve Supportive Care and Patient-Centred Outcomes, highlighted how family, friends, carers and wider social networks influence the experiences of older adults with cancer. Understanding these relationships can help identify unmet needs, carer pressures and opportunities for coordinated support.

Our key takeaway from Valencia? Identifying frailty and completing CGA is only the beginning. The real opportunity lies in translating findings into individualised interventions, connecting patients with appropriate services and ensuring their priorities inform care.

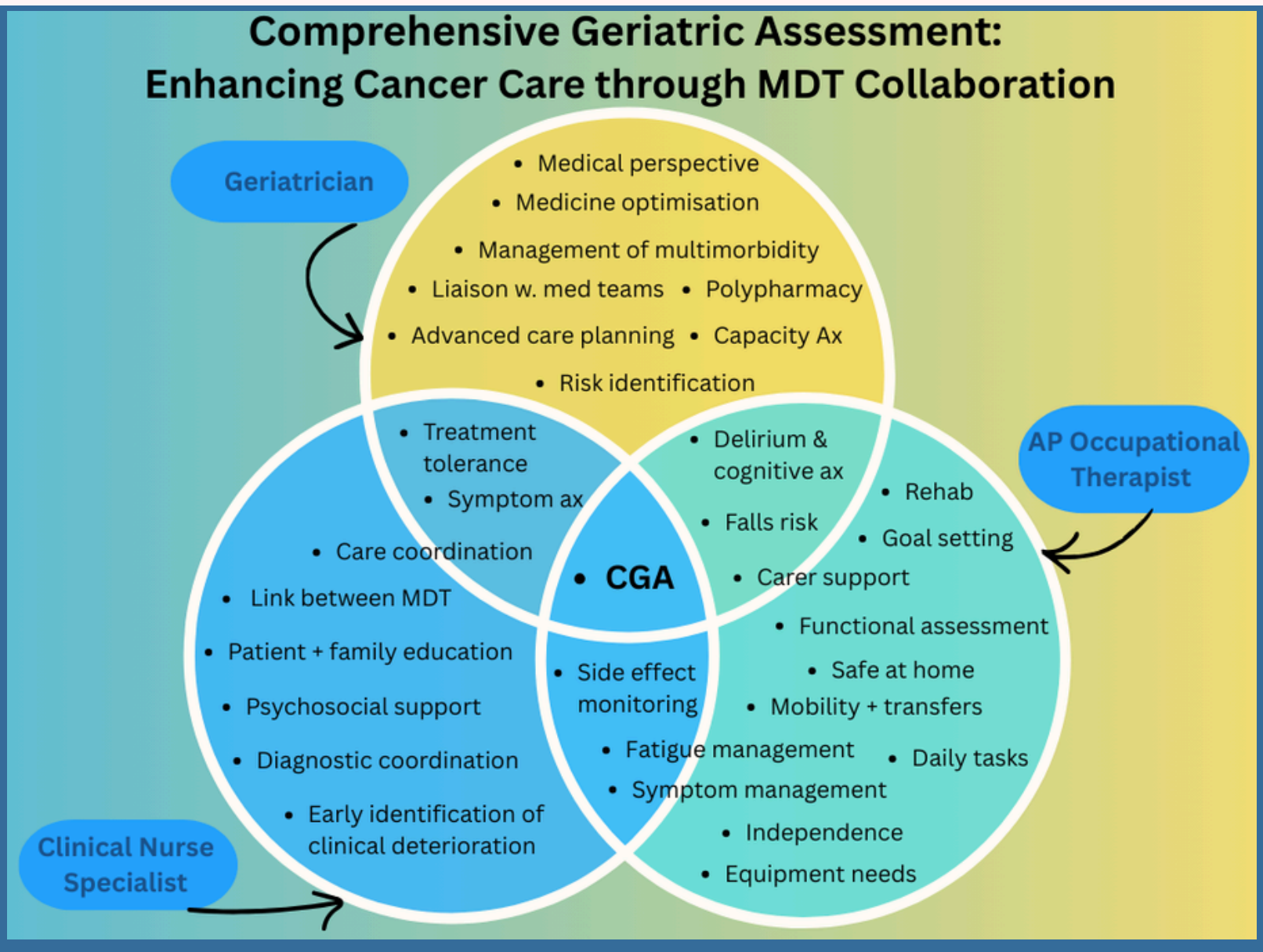
As we continue developing COPS, this reinforces an important question for the wider MDT:

"We've identified the patient's needs... what can we do to make a meaningful difference?"

Further reading - CLICK HERE

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The G8 screening tool helps identify older people with cancer who may benefit from a CGA. At COPS, CGAs are holistic, considering frailty, function, mobility, cognition, mental health, medications, and social factors to develop a personalised care plan based on what matters most to the patient.

CGA AND ONCOLOGY - DOES IT HELP?

Evidence suggests that following **a CGA**:

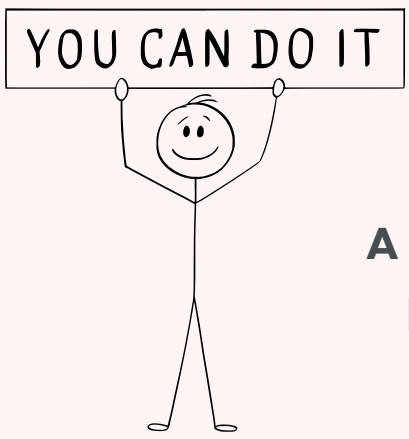
1. Patient Outcomes are **improved.**
2. Patients are more likely to **complete treatment and experience less severe toxicities.**
3. The patient and team **produce problem lists** and **develop goal-driven interventions** to tackle these.
4. Hospital re-admissions are **reduced.**

THE G8 GERIATRIC SCREENING TOOL

The total **G-8 score** lies between **0 and 17**.

A **higher** score indicates a **better** health status.

Not sure if your patient would benefit from CGA? A G8 frailty screen is a great starting point. COPS is happy to support, if you need.



G8 questionnaire

Items	Possible answers (score)
Has food intake declined over the past 3 months due to loss of appetite, digestive problems, chewing or swallowing difficulties?	0 : severe decrease in food intake
	1 : moderate decrease in food intake
	2 : no decrease in food intake
Weight loss during the last 3 months	0 : weight loss > 3 kg
	1 : does not know
	2 : weight loss between 1 and 3 kgs
	3 : no weight loss
Mobility	0 : bed or chair bound
	1 : able to get out of bed/chair but does not go out
	2 : goes out
Neuropsychological problems	0 : severe dementia or depression
	1 : mild dementia or depression
	2 : no psychological problems
Body Mass Index (BMI (weight in kg) / (height in m^2)	0 : BMI < 19
	1 : BMI = 19 to BMI < 21
	2 : BMI = 21 to BMI < 23
	3 : BMI = 23 and > 23
Takes more than 3 medications per day	0 : yes
	1 : no
In comparison with other people of the same age, how does the patient consider his/her health status?	0 : not as good
	0.5 : does not know
	1 : as good
	2 : better
Age	0 : >85
	1 : 80-85
	2 : <80
TOTAL SCORE	**0 – 17**

A threshold is suggested **at 14 points**, meaning that a patient with **a score of 14 or lower** should undergo **full geri-evaluation.**

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HOW TO REFER TO THE COPS TEAM:



INPATIENTS: All referrals to be done on Trakcare.

Beatson WOS Cancer Centre Patients Only

ITEM LOCATION: CANCER OLDER PEOPLES SERVICE

*THERE ARE POSTERS TO ASSIST WITH THIS IN EACH DOCTOR'S ROOM

Please use the G8 screening tool (found in the **medical admission notes**) for every patient aged 65 years and older. A score of 14 or below indicates the need for further assessment. Please refer to the COPS team as soon as possible.

OUTPATIENTS:

For all outpatient referrals - please email GGC.COPS@nhs.scot with patient information, concerns, referral needs and cancer diagnosis.



PATIENT CRITERIA & WHAT WE DO

Referral Criteria

1. Aged **65 and over**

2. Attending the Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre (BWoSCC), **including umbrella clinics**, with a confirmed cancer diagnosis,

3. Patients presenting with **one or more frailty characteristics or complex comorbidities**, including:

- Challenges with activities of daily living (ADLs)
- Falls or high falls risk
- Reduced or declining mobility
- Delirium, cognitive change, or memory concerns
- Continence issues
- Treatment-related side effects impacting function
- Anxiety or psychological distress affecting engagement or care
- Palliative or supportive care needs
- Equipment or environmental adaptation needs

A 'one-stop shop' supportive oncology and haematology service for older people with cancer and frailty. Our multidisciplinary onco-geriatric team provides holistic assessment and support, including medical review, symptom management, polypharmacy review, social support, equipment provision, and onward referral to hospital- and community-based services. We can see patients at any point in their cancer journey, including before, during, or after treatment, to support function, safety, and quality of life.

THE beatson WEST OF SCOTLAND CANCER CENTRE

Beatson cancer CHARITY

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

In partnership with MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT