

COPS CHRONICLE

OCTOBER 2025 - ISSUE 18



FALLS WEEK 2025

Contact Us



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WHAT'S NEW

COPS SHORTLISTED FOR THREE SCOTLAND HEALTH AWARDS!

We're delighted to share that COPS has been shortlisted as a finalist in **three categories** at the 2025 Scotland Health Awards.

- **Innovation Award:** for transforming cancer care through frailty-informed, onco-geriatric practice.
- **Integrated Care Award:** for cross-specialty collaboration improving outcomes + patient flow.
- **AHP of the Year:** recognising Carly Rolston for national leadership and innovation.

With over 800 nominations across 17 categories, we're deeply grateful for this recognition. It means a great deal that others see the value of the COPS approach + the vital contribution of OT within it.

COPS Goes International!

COPS is travelling to Boston to present our Q2 data this month at the SIO Conference!

Poster: *Optimizing Cancer Care for Older Adults: The Impact of Embedded OT in the COPS Model.*

CHECK OUT OUR REFERRAL PATHWAY CHANGE BELOW!

GERIATRICIANS:

DR SEENAN & DR ADREES

CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST:

TRACY DOWNEY

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST:

CARLY ROLSTON

TOPIC OF THE MONTH: EMBRACING DIGNITY, RIGHTS & ROLE OF OT

On **1 October**, we join the global community in recognising **International Day of Older Persons** under the theme "Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights." This year's message is clear: **older people are not passive recipients of healthcare, but active citizens whose aspirations and rights must shape the way we deliver services.**

In COPS, this principle sits at the heart of our work. We know that when older people with cancer are supported to remain functionally well, heard in decision-making, and enabled to live with dignity, outcomes improve for individuals, families, and the wider health system. Occupational therapy provides a unique contribution here by combining practical interventions with advocacy, empowerment, and a focus on what matters most to people.

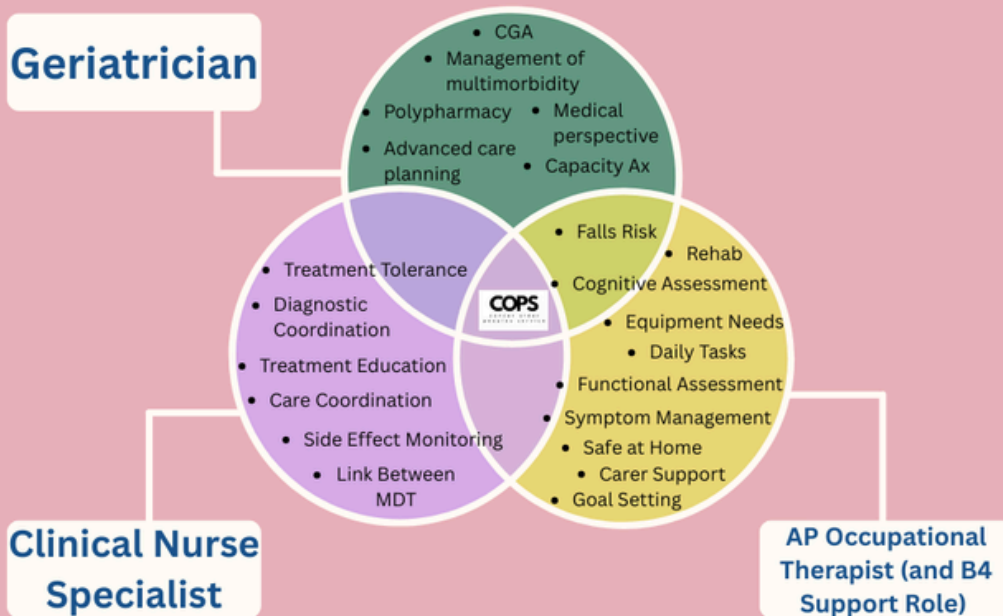
But this agenda is also about leadership and governance. Services like COPS demonstrate how frailty-informed, person-centred care can reduce admissions, ease patient flow, and create value across the NHS. By aligning with global ageing priorities and embedding occupational therapy at the centre of cancer pathways, we are not just supporting individuals. We are shaping how the system itself adapts to an ageing population. This requires strategic leadership, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and strong governance frameworks that ensure innovation translates into sustainable practice.

Looking ahead, **RCOT's OT Week 2025 (3-9 November)** will focus on "Right Support, Right Time: Unlocking the Power of OT." Our team will be highlighting how the COPS model delivers this in practice, bridging medical treatment with lived experience, and showing that occupational therapy is not just responsive, but transformative.

This October, we highlight how the Beatson leads in delivering services that honour older people's rights, amplify their voices, and embed dignity and well-being.

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Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment: Enhancing Cancer Care through MDT Collaboration



The G8 screening tool helps identify older cancer patients who may benefit from a CGA. At COPS, CGAs are holistic and include review of frailty, physical function, mobility, cognition, mental health, polypharmacy, and social factors. This helps us develop a personalised care plan based on what matters most to the patient, with regular reviews to ensure each aspect of care is followed through.

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.
1. 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.

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

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

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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: All outpatient referrals to COPS should now be submitted via Sci Gateway.

*Please note that referrals sent by email will no longer be accepted.

If you have any difficulty finding COPS on Sci Gateway or would like to discuss a referral, please email GGC.COPS@nhs.scot and we can assist you.

Please ensure patients meet the referral criteria below, which help identify those who will benefit most.



PATIENT CRITERIA & WHAT WE DO

Referral Criteria

1. Every patient **over 65 who attends (or previously has attended) BWoSCC with a CA diagnosis AND**

2. Any patient who presents with **frailty characteristics or complex comorbidities:**

- Challenges with ADLs
- Falls
- Decreased mobility
- Delirium / cognition
- Continence issues
- Treatment side effects
- Anxiety
- Pall care needs
- Equipment needs

A 'one-stop shop' supportive oncology service for people over 65 years old, with a cancer diagnosis and complex needs and/or comorbidities. Our multidisciplinary onco-geriatrics team can provide medical assessments, assist with symptom management, implement social support, provide equipment, complete polypharmacy reviews and refer onwards to community and hospital based services. We can see patients at any time during their cancer journey, including before or after treatment.