Home based care for febrile neutropenia
Parent Information Sheet

Your child is being treated for **febrile neutropenia (FN).** This means your child has a fever higher than 38°C and low neutrophils, which is a type of white blood cell important for fighting infections. Because of the low neutrophils your child is less able to fight infections.

Over recent years, teams from around the world have studied the safest approach to managing this problem, with the aim to manage patients safely, whilst minimising time spent in hospital. To this purpose. children with febrile neutropenia are put into different 'risk' groups, depending on their risk of serious infection **during that specific episode**. All UK children are treated in the same way, based on common guidelines.

The oncology team have assessed your child as having a **low-risk** febrile neutropenia episode. St Peter's Hospital now has a way to treat low-risk febrile neutropenia safely at home with support from the hospital. This means your child can complete their antibiotics at home. Your hospital's oncology team will work closely with you and your child to monitor your child's progress.

Eligibility for home treatment

Before we can transfer your child home the following must be true:

- you have agreed to live, or have accommodation, within 1 hours drive of St Peter's Hospital
- you must have immediate transport available (either car or ambulance) if you have to return to St Peter's Hospital
- you must have a working home phone or mobile phone
- you must agree to the instructions of the oncology team.

When you are at home

When your child goes home, a member of the hospital team will call you regularly until your child is well and has completed their antibiotics. You may be asked to stop giving the antibiotics even though you have some left.

While you are at home, you will need to take your child's temperature every 4 hours when they are awake until you are told by the hospital team you can stop.

Your child will be receiving antibiotics as a medicine by mouth or via their NG tube. Please follow the instructions for giving these that are given by your hospital.

When to call the hospital

We expect your child to carry on having temperatures for a while; it might take up to three days for it to settle completely. We will ask about it when we call you, but do not want you to worry just because you child gets hot during this episode.

You should contact the hospital team on 01932 722 714 (24 hours per day/7 days per week) at any time if you are worried about your child or if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Does not feel well or look right to you
- Chills or shaking
- Persistent vomiting or new diarrhoea
- Localised infection: redness, tenderness or pain anywhere on the body
- Pain: severe or persistent
- Tiredness, paleness or shortness of breath
- Dehydration – decreased urine, dry mouth
- Refusing to drink
- Your child has a low temperature (less than 36°C)
- Your child has a new high temperature >38°C after 24 hours without a high temperature

Remember, you know your child best. If you are concerned or worried, or if something doesn't feel quite right, speak to your child's treating team.

In an emergency, call 999