



BREAST CENTRES NETWORK

Synergy among Breast Units

Centro Hospitalar e Universitário de Coimbra - Coimbra, Portugal

General Information



New breast cancer cases treated per year 320

Breast multidisciplinary team members 36

Radiologists, surgeons, pathologists, medical oncologists, radiotherapists and nurses

Clinical Director: Joana Belo, MD

In the era of personalized cancer care, the creation of specialized units to treat these patients is crucial. Our Breast Unit is part of the Gynaecology Service of Coimbra Hospital and University Centre (CHUC). It consists of a cohesive and dedicated multidisciplinary group of specialists in breast pathology who work together to ensure high-quality care. We have created a model focused on the patient, where the concept of the 'single act' prevails. This allows the Multidisciplinary Decision Team (MDT) to rapidly define the diagnosis and treatment fulfilling the temporal criteria defined by EUSOMA. The MDT incorporates Medical Oncologists, Radiotherapy, Radiologists, Anatomopathologists taking place weekly. All clinical cases are discussed following the European Guidelines in an attempt to standardise procedures. To achieve the holistic approach to the patient, our Breast Unit works in straight relation with Genetics, Plastic Surgery, Psychiatry, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Team. Specialized nurses work as a link between numerous departments, such as Psychology, Nutrition, Social Work, signalling and channelling patients' needs.

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Available services

- Radiology
- Breast Surgery
- Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery
- Pathology
- Medical Oncology
- Radiotherapy

- Nuclear Medicine
- Rehabilitation
- Genetic Counselling
- Data Management
- Psycho-oncology
- Breast Nurses

- Social Workers
- Nutritional Counselling
- Survivorship Groups
- Sexual Health Counselling
- Supportive and Palliative Care
- Integrative Medicine

Radiology

- Dedicated Radiologists** 7
- Mammograms per year** 4408
- Breast radiographers**
- Screening program**
- Verification for non-palpable breast lesions on specimen**
- Axillary US/US-guided FNAB**
- Clinical Research**

Available imaging equipment

- Mammography
- Ultrasound
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

Available work-up imaging equipment

- Computer Tomography
- Ultrasound
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- PET/CT scan

Primary technique for localizing non-palpable lesions

- Hook-wire (or needle localization)
- Charcoal marking/tattooing
- ROLL: radio-guided occult lesion localization

Available breast tissue sampling equipment

- Stereotactic Biopsy (Mammography guided)
 - Core Biopsy (Tru-cut)
 - Vacuum assisted biopsy
- Ultrasound-guided biopsy
 - Fine-needle aspiration biopsy (FNAB, cytology)
 - Core Biopsy
 - Vacuum assisted biopsy
- MRI-guided biopsy
 - Core Biopsy
 - Vacuum assisted biopsy

Breast Surgery

- New operated cases per year (benign and malignant)** 570
- Dedicated Breast Surgeons** 6
- Surgeons with more than 50 surgeries per year** 6
- Breast Surgery beds** 20
- Breast Nurse specialists** 12
- Outpatient surgery**
- Intra-operative evaluation of sentinel node**
- Reconstruction performed by Breast Surgeons**
- Clinical Research**

Primary technique for staging the axilla

- Axillary lymph node dissection
- Sentinel lymph node biopsy:
 - Blue dye technique
 - Radio-tracer technique
 - Blue dye + Radio-tracer
- Axillary sampling

Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery

- Reconstructive/Plastic surgeons** 3
- Immediate Reconstruction available**

Type of breast reconstructive surgery available

- Remodelling after breast-conserving surgery
- Reconstruction after mastectomy:
 - Two-stage reconstruction (tissue expander followed by implant)
 - One-stage reconstruction
 - Autogenous tissue flap
 - Latissimus dorsi flap
 - Transverse rectus abdominis (TRAM)
 - Free-flaps (free TRAM, DIEP, SIEA, gluteal, etc.)
- Surgery on the contralateral breast for symmetry

Pathology

- Dedicated Breast Pathologists** 3

Available studies

- Cytology
- Haematoxylin & eosin section (H&E)
 - Surgical specimen
 - Sentinel node
 - Core biopsy
- Frozen section (FS)
 - Surgical specimen
 - Sentinel node
- Immunohistochemistry stain (IHC)
 - Estrogen receptors
 - Progesterone receptors
 - HER-2
 - Ki-67

Other special studies available

- Fluorescence in-situ Hybridization for HER-2 gene (FISH)
- Oncotype Dx (21-gene assay)
- MammaPrint (70-gene microarray)
- Prediction Analysis of Microarray 50-gene set (PAM 50)

Parameters included in the final pathology report

- Pathology stage (pT and pN)
- Tumour size (invasive component in mm)
- Histologic type
- Tumor grade
- ER/PR receptor status
- HER-2/neu receptor status
- Peritumoural/Lymphovascular invasion
- Margin status

Medical Oncology

- Dedicated Breast Medical Oncologists** 7
- Outpatient systemic therapy**
- Clinical Research**

Radiotherapy

Dedicated Radiation Oncologists

Clinical Research

Available techniques after breast-conserving surgery (including experimental)

Whole-Breast RT (WBRT)

Partial breast irradiation (PBI):

External beam PBI

Interstitial brachytherapy

Targeted brachytherapy (MammoSite, SAVI applicator, other devices)

Intra-operative RT (IORT)

Multidisciplinary Meeting (MDM) / Tumour Board (TB)

Regular MDM/TB for case management discussion

Twice a week

Weekly

Every two weeks

Other Schedule

Cases discussed at MDM/TB

Preoperative cases

Postoperative cases

Specialties/services participating in MDM/TB

Radiology

Breast Surgery

Reconstructive/Plastic Surgery

Pathology

Medical Oncology

Radiotherapy

Genetic Counselling

Breast Nurse Service

Psycho-oncology

Further Services and Facilities

Nuclear Medicine

Lymphoscintigraphy

Bone scan

Positron Emission Tomography (PET)

PET/CT scan

Rehabilitation

Prosthesis service

Physiotherapy

Lymph-oedema treatment

Genetic Counselling

Specialist Providing Genetic Counselling/Risk assessment service:

Dedicated Clinical Geneticist

Medical Oncologist

Breast Surgeon

General Surgeon

Gynaecologist

Genetic Testing available

Surveillance program for high-risk women

Data Management

Database used for clinical information

Data manager available

Contact details

Clinical Director

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Radiology

Manuela Gonçalo, MD	Radiology Specialist	manuela_goncalo@hotmail.com	00351 919062362
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Breast Surgery

Joana Belo, MD	Gynecological and Breast Cancer Surgical Oncologist	joana.belo14@gmail.com	00351 918 286 079
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Reconstructive Surgery

Carla Diogo, MD	Plastic Surgeon	cmo.diogo@gmail.com	00351 965 501 351
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Pathology

Teresa Simões Silva, MD	Pathology specialist	teresassoliveira@gmail.com	00351 933338070
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Medical Oncology

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Radiotherapy

Margarida Borrego, MD	Director of Service and Radioncology specialist	margaridab@chuc.min-saude.pt	00351 239400520
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How to reach us



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From airport:

Coimbra is located in the center of Portugal with an airport closer to 120km (in the city of Porto) or about 200km from the city of Lisbon.

By train:

The distance between train station and hospital is about 3 km

By bus or sub-way/underground:

There are buses with stops at the hospital entrance

By car:

The hospital has parking for cars

Last modified: 20 November 2020