

Psychology service for people with cancer and their families

Georgina Unit

Patient Information Leaflet

What is this leaflet about?

Your doctor, nurse or other healthcare professional may suggest you talk to a cancer psychologist. Cancer affects the whole person, not just the body, and we know you may benefit from talking about the emotional effects of your illness. This leaflet explains what a cancer psychologist is, what difficulties they can help you with, and how you can be referred to this service.

Cancer and mental health

A diagnosis of cancer is life changing. Each individual will experience a range of psychological and social problems as a result of their diagnosis and treatment-related adverse effects; the impact of cancer doesn't stop when the treatment does. People often feel more lost and worried after the 'race' during the treatment phase is over.

Anxiety, depression and other emotional symptoms are common and can sometimes form the most challenging part of the cancer experience. You may recognise just some of the changes from the following:

- Coping with how cancer affects your relationships, or intimacy;
- Managing the demands of home and family life;
- Feelings of very low mood, anxiety and even anger;
- Coping with a sense that your future is uncertain or unknown;
- Coping with pain, discomfort, fatigue and treatment side-effects;
- Coping with how cancer affects self-esteem and sense of self/body image, and much more.

What is the cancer psychology service?

The service provides psychological and emotional support to patients and their families. Cancer psychologists specialise in helping people struggling to cope and adjust to the emotional stresses and strains that accompany the cancer and its effects.

What happens if I want to use the service?

If you decide that you want to meet with a psychologist, or if one of the medical team suggests you meet with a psychologist, the nurse or doctor will refer you to the service. Shortly after this, the psychologist will come and meet with you if you are in hospital.

If you are an outpatient, they will write to you and ask you to 'opt into' the service, and we will send an appointment time to you.

Where do the appointments take place?

The meeting can happen at the hospital or at Cross Street Health Centre in Dudley town centre.

Sessions can be arranged any time between 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Sessions can be arranged on a regular basis; for example, weekly, fortnightly etc.

How long do the appointments last?

Each appointment can last between 30 and 60 minutes, and can involve just you, you with your loved one or the whole family. It is your choice.

What happens at the appointments?

The first meeting is an opportunity for you to get to know the psychologist, explore what you want to gain from the time together and see if you would like to meet again.

What about partners or loved ones?

We also know that carers and families experience emotional and psychological distress during and after active treatment. As a service, we are happy to offer joint appointments with you and your family member.

Will what I say be confidential?

Confidentiality is very important to establishing trust and, in general, what you say to a psychologist will be kept confidential. However, in exceptional circumstances, such as those where there may be a risk to you or to others, we may have to pass on information you have given without your consent.

Can I find out more?

If you have any comments or queries about the cancer psychology service, please contact Dr Chantelle Osborn, senior psychologist using the details below:

Physical Health Psychology Service

Cross Street Health Centre

Dudley

West Midlands

DY1 1RN

Tel: 01384 366249 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Fax: 0121 612 3762

Russell's Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/oncology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ، ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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