

How can therapy help?

We work with people by providing a safe space to talk through problems and issues, developing a collaborative understanding of the problems and assisting people in learning new ways of managing difficult thoughts and feelings so they have less negative impact.

We are not psychiatrists, so do not prescribe drugs.

We have one Clinical Psychologist, a Counsellor and a Therapist who specialise in a range of therapies to help people with the particular problems associated with cancer and its treatment. There are sometimes thoughts, emotions and fears that can cause difficulties and the methods offered to each patient may differ depending on individual circumstances.

Therapy may include looking at different ways of understanding or dealing with problems, talking over things that are worrying you, and exploring the link between physical and emotional symptoms. You will also be taught practical skills and strategies and encouraged to try out new ways of coping in your everyday life, between appointments.

You can be referred to the Psychologist by your GP, Consultant, Specialist Nurse or any other member of the Cancer Support Team.

Why are people referred to the Psychologist, Counsellor or Therapist?

People with serious and long-term health problems can often suffer from psychological distress. Adjusting to the demands of illness and its treatment is very challenging and difficult. When this distress becomes problematic in a person's life, therapy can be helpful.

Partners and family members of those patients working with us can also experience anxiety about a person's illness and may have difficulty adjusting or knowing how best to be helpful. We may see you as a couple/family or where necessary and possible offer input from another member of our psychological therapists team.

The service accepts referrals from GPs, Consultants, Specialist Nurses or other members of the Cancer Support Team.

Confidentiality

Your right to confidentiality is very important and will be respected. We will only share information about you with other professionals directly involved with your care and this will be on a needs-to-know basis.

What happens when you are referred?

You will receive a letter asking you to call us to make a convenient appointment. This is for an assessment appointment, to ascertain if the service is the right one for your needs and to decide if and what type of therapy will be helpful going forwards? You will then

receive your appointment in the post, along with some short questionnaires to fill in to help us understand your individual needs and difficulties.

It is important that you let us know if you cannot attend, so that the appointment may be offered to someone else.

If you decide that you do not wish to see us after all, please let us know. If you do not keep an appointment and do not contact to say why, we will assume that you no longer wish to be seen, and will not routinely send you another appointment.

What happens at your first appointment?

- The Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist Will explain in more detail what the service offers.
- You will be asked to read and sign a consent form, to make sure you know why you have been referred and that you agree with it.
- The Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist will ask you about your problems and concerns in detail and will discuss with you what kind of therapy is likely to be helpful. They may also talk to family members, but only with your permission.

What happens next?

At the end of the first meeting, depending on what issues have been explored, you will agree whether and when to arrange further meetings.

You may decide together that you do not need or want therapy sessions

Or

You will be offered a number of appointments. These will usually be weekly or fortnightly, for about 50 minutes each.

Or

With your consent, you may be referred on to a different service that better meets your needs

After you finish seeing the Psychologist, Counsellor or Therapist

- We may ask you to complete another set of short questionnaires. You will also be sent a patient satisfaction form. This is to provide ongoing feedback to ensure the best service for you and others.
- We will send a discharge letter to your GP and hospital Consultant,. You can also request copies of letters if you wish.

Other information

As with many other health professions, the Psychologist/Counsellor/Therapist may (with your permission) have a junior colleague present. This person may later

be the one who works with you. The work of all training Psychologists/Counsellors/Therapists is very closely monitored by their senior colleagues.

If you have any questions or comments about the service please contact Dr Ellen Young at the address on the front of this leaflet.

Formal complaints about the Service may be made to the Head of the Department of Clinical Psychology at Torbay Hospital:

Dr Allyson Turnbull
Consultant Clinical Psychologist and
Head of Clinical Health Psychology
Hengrave House
Torbay Hospital
Torquay
TQ2 7AA

This is in accordance with the South Devon Healthcare Trust Policy and the Department of Clinical Psychology Policy regarding patients' complaints.

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.

PATIENT INFORMATION

Macmillan Psycho-Oncology Service

Clinical Health Psychology
Hengrave House
Torbay Hospital
Lowes Bridge
Torquay TQ2 7AA

Dr Ellen Young
Macmillan Consultant Clinical
Psychologist

Michelle Quick
Macmillan Counsellor

Michelle Wilson
Psychological Therapist

Tel: 01803 654654