

How to be referred to a psychologist?

If you would like to talk to a psychologist and this has not yet been offered to you, then you can ask your clinical nurse specialist (CNS) to refer you.

What happens once I have been referred to a psychologist?

If you are currently an inpatient then the psychologist will aim to visit you on the ward. If you are an outpatient, then your CNS will arrange an appointment for you to meet with the psychologist at the Berkshire Cancer Centre at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

The first appointment can last up to an hour and is an opportunity for you to discuss the problems you would like support with and to decide what kind of help will be most useful. The appointment may be a one-off or you may agree to meet again. You will normally be offered between one and six appointments. Appointments may be on a regular basis, e.g. weekly, fortnightly, monthly or every now and again. If we decide that an alternative

service would be more appropriate, then we can help with making a referral.

What about confidentiality?

The clinical psychologist will only share information that will help your medical team to support you. In addition, if the psychologist is concerned that you are, or another person is, at risk of some harm, then they are duty bound to inform the relevant professionals.

A record of the meeting will be written in your medical notes, electronic records and/or a summary letter will be written to your consultant and GP and you will be sent a copy.

Contacts: Tel. 0118 322 5111
Bleep 440 for Leukaemia CNS
Bleep 440 for Acute Haematology CNS
Bleep 094 for Myeloma CNS
Bleep 446 for Lymphoma CNS
Bleep 439/330 for Myeloproliferative Neoplasm/Chronic Myeloid Leukaemia

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Clinical Health Psychology Service for Haematology

Information for patients

This information is for patients who are under the care of the Haematology Service as either inpatients or outpatients. The leaflet explains what a clinical health psychologist is, what difficulties they can help with and how to be referred to the service.

The experience of a haematological condition is more than just the physical aspects of the disease and its treatment. There are emotional effects too, such as feelings of fear, anger, sadness or depression, and these are quite normal. They may come and go, or can seem to be there most of the time.

Sometimes, emotional stress can be dealt with by the person themselves, with the help of their families/friends and support of their health care team. However, if you are experiencing high levels of distress you may benefit from the help of a clinical health psychologist.

What is a clinical health psychologist?

Clinical health psychologists specialise in helping people cope with extraordinary circumstances, such as having a serious and/or chronic physical illness.

Clinical psychologists spend a minimum of 6 years training before qualifying and are approved by the Health and Care Professions Council.

Clinical psychologists are not medical doctors like psychiatrists; they do not prescribe medicine, and do not admit people into hospital.

A clinical psychologist will listen to what you have to say, and explore your problems and concerns.

They will work together with you to focus on your strengths and resources to find ways to cope and manage alongside the demands of the physical illness.

What kind of help?

Meeting with a clinical health psychologist can help you to:

- manage distressing thoughts and feelings;
- make more sense of the situation;
- consider the impact of the illness on yourself and those around you;
- look at how to harness your existing strengths in coping with things;
- develop new approaches to coping and to see how they work out in practice;
- work on the best ways for you to communicate with the people around you;
- cope with uncertainty of future health and treatment;
- adjust to everyday life whilst living with the effects of your health problem.