



Psychological health services

Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre (BHOC)



Respecting everyone
Embracing change
Recognising success
Working together
Our hospitals.


Above + Beyond 
For Patients. For Health. For Bristol.

Why are there psychological health services at the Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre (BHOC)?

We recognise that distress can be a natural response to the experience of cancer and its treatments, so healthcare workers at the BHOC aim to provide good psychological care to all patients and those around them. However, the emotional and personal impact may be greater and last longer for some people, so there are psychological health services at BHOC specifically to support people affected by cancer.

What is a clinical psychologist?

Clinical psychologists have a minimum of six years of specialist training in a variety of psychological approaches. These approaches can help when people are having difficult thoughts or feelings that are affecting their well-being and making it harder to do the things they need or want to do.

Clinical psychologists are not medically trained. They do not prescribe medication or diagnose mental illnesses. The clinical psychologists who work in our service have gone on to specialise in reducing psychological distress and enhancing psychological well-being for people coming to hospital. They are all registered as qualified clinical psychologists with the Health Care Professions Council.

What kinds of concerns might a clinical psychologist be able to help with?

Every situation is different and is assessed individually. Some of the more common concerns that a clinical psychologist might help with include:

- adapting to and coping with the illness
- managing fatigue, 'chemobrain' and other treatment side effects
- dealing with difficult feelings such as anxiety, anger and sadness
- tackling worries and living with uncertainty
- learning ways to cope with tests, procedures and treatments
- making decisions about treatment
- moving forward with your life after treatment has finished
- dealing with difficulties in your relationships since diagnosis.

How can I arrange to see a clinical psychologist?

You can arrange to see a clinical psychologist by talking to any member of your healthcare team here (for example, your nurse or doctor), or the staff at the Cancer Information and Support Centre, about making a referral on your behalf. If you are currently an inpatient, we will visit you on the ward to discuss this with you. If you are at home, we will contact you to offer you an outpatient appointment. We can meet with you on your own, or with a partner or family member. Please contact us on the telephone number on page 7 if you require hospital transport for the appointment, or if we can help you to access the service in any other way. Interpreters are available on request.

I've been given this guide but I'm not sure why

If a member of your healthcare team has given you this guide, it does not mean that they think you are not coping or that you 'need help'. It may be that they recognise your situation is difficult, that you appeared distressed, or that they simply wanted you to be aware that these services existed for future reference. The decision to use psychological health services is entirely up to you, and if you decide not to, this will not affect your healthcare in any way.

What will happen if I meet with one of the clinical psychologists?

The first meeting is an opportunity to talk through what has happened, and about what help or support will be helpful to you. We will spend some time finding out about your experience of cancer, your current concerns, and what you would like help to change. We may also ask about your life before cancer. Sometimes, more than one appointment is necessary for us to get the full picture, or for you to decide on what you want to be different.

You do not need to bring anything with you to your appointments with us and there are no costs involved.

What happens next?

The outcome of the appointment will depend on your concerns and what you would like to change. Sometimes, it may be enough to meet with one of the team once or twice for you to feel you can take things forward with the support you already have in place. Sometimes, there are other kinds of help that we may suggest you might find useful – for example, if you have practical problems that you need help with.

Sometimes it may be that a pre-arranged number of sessions would be more helpful, in order to address particular difficulties in a structured way. The therapies we offer are normally quite short – between four and 12 sessions – and focused on cancer-related issues. If you have psychological difficulties not related to cancer, we will normally recommend a referral to a more appropriate service for you.

What happens to the information I tell you?

We are part of the care provided to you at the BHOC. If you are having psychological difficulties relating to cancer or its treatment, it is important for the staff working with you closely to be aware of this. Therefore, we will let your healthcare team and your GP know if you come to see us, what your main concerns are, and what the plan is in terms of support and help for you. If you come for psychological therapy, we will keep them updated.

If you tell us something that you do not want us to share with anyone outside our service, please let us know. Unless there is a risk of harm to yourself or others, we will ensure that this information is not shared with anyone outside of psychological health services without your permission.

We will keep notes about the sessions you have with us. These will be kept securely and confidentially. These notes are to help us remember the details of the concerns you have discussed with us, and the plans we have agreed.

If you have any concerns, or want to know more about the information that is likely to be shared about your care, please talk to us about this.

What is the Cancer Information and Support Centre?

The Cancer Information and Support Centre is in the main entrance of the BHOC. It is run by two full-time staff and a team of trained volunteers who have had experience of cancer at some point in their lives. They can provide you with information you might need, access to other services (such as financial advice), and emotional support. You can talk to a volunteer for information or support by telephoning **0117 342 3369**, or drop in between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

What if I am not satisfied with the service I receive?

If you have concerns about the service you receive from our department, please discuss them first with the member of our staff supporting you.

If this does not address your concerns, please contact:

- the head of Trust psychological health services. You can contact them by telephone on **0117 342 8168**

or

- the patient support and complaints team. You can contact them by telephone on **0117 342 1050**.

Psychological health services at BHOC

Telephone: 0117 342 1700

(Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm)

Address:

Psychological health services

Ground floor

Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre

Horfield Road

Bristol

BS2 8ED

Please note that if for any reason you would value a second opinion concerning your diagnosis or treatment, you are entirely within your rights to request this.

The first step would usually be to discuss this with the doctor or other lead clinician who is responsible for your care.

Smoking is the primary cause of preventable illness and premature death. For support in stopping smoking contact **Smokefree Bristol** on **0117 922 2255**.

As well as providing clinical care, our Trust has an important role in research. This allows us to discover new and improved ways of treating patients.

While under our care, you may be invited to take part in research. To find out more please visit:
www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/research-innovation
or call the research and innovation team on
0117 342 0233.

For access to other patient leaflets and information please go to the following address:

www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/information-for-patients/

Hospital switchboard: 0117 923 0000



Minicom: 0117 934 9869



www.uhbristol.nhs.uk



For an interpreter or signer please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter.



For this leaflet in large print, audio or PDF format, please call the patient information service:



0117 342 3728 / 3725

