

THE BEATSON WEST OF SCOTLAND CANCER CENTRE

Seeing a Psychologist

This leaflet provides information about seeing a clinical psychologist. It is a guide to what this involves and the type of concerns we may be able to support you with.

1053 Great Western Road, Glasgow, G12 0YN

Telephone: 0141 201 0123

What is a clinical psychologist?

Clinical psychologists are trained to help people understand and deal with difficult emotions, thoughts and behaviours. They talk with people about issues that are important to them. They try to help them find a way to move forward. Clinical psychologists are not medically trained. They do not prescribe medication and do not conduct physical examinations.

Clinical psychologists can help with a wide range of problems that affect quality of life or make it difficult to have medical treatments or procedures. Some of the common reasons for referral include:

- Difficulties coping with diagnosis and treatment of cancer, and anxiety about the future.
- Depression, low mood.
- Anxiety or stress, panic, phobias, including needle phobia, claustrophobia, social phobia.
- Difficulties in coping with physical symptoms such as chronic pain or fatigue.
- Difficulties coping with changes as a result of cancer or treatment, for example changes in relationships, your appearance, speech, mobility, sexual functioning.
- Assessment for issues with memory, concentration and attention.

How can a clinical psychologist help me?

Your clinical psychologist will meet with you to assess and identify what your needs are. They will usually see you on your own, although a family member or friend can join you if you would prefer. They will then decide if further psychological therapy would be helpful. They will discuss and agree an appropriate plan of treatment with you.

Your psychologist will give you more information at your first appointment, including what to expect at future appointments. You will also be able to ask any questions you may have.

To get the most out of your treatment your psychologist will expect you to take an active part. This might mean carrying out agreed tasks related to your problem in your own time in between appointments.

Is my treatment confidential?

Your psychologist will usually keep a written record of your discussion within your electronic medical record. Other members of your care team can access this. Your psychologist does not need to document everything that you discuss. If there is something that you would prefer them not to document, please discuss this with your psychologist. However, if they have a concern about your

safety or someone else's safety they must document this and may share this with other professionals. A written letter is also usually sent to your GP, hospital consultant and other appropriate members of your care team. If you have any concerns about what information is shared and who can access it, please discuss this with your psychologist.

How often will I need to attend?

If psychological treatment is appropriate, your psychologist will suggest how often and how long future appointments will last.

Will I have to wait to be seen?

We do have a waiting list for outpatient appointments. However, we do try to see people urgently when needed.

Appointment information:

Appointments will normally be arranged with your psychologist at a time to suit you. Your first appointment will last about one hour. This will allow you time to talk about any problems you may be having. You may also be asked to complete a questionnaire about how you are feeling.

Your appointment may be in person at the clinic in The Beatson West of Scotland Cancer Centre, or we may offer you a telephone or video call. We will discuss this with you.

Please note that it is important that you attend for your appointment on time. If for any reason you are unable to attend an appointment, it is very important that you contact us beforehand. If you do not let us know that you are unable to attend, you may be discharged from the service. The telephone number of the Clinical Psychology Secretary is **0141 201 0123**.

If you have a telephone appointment, please note, the number we call from may display as withheld or from 0141 232 4000.

Leaflet prepared by Beatson Psychology Service

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