



Psychological support for families under care of the oncology team



Respecting everyone
Embracing change
Recognising success
Working together
Our hospitals.

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

Why is there a clinical psychologist in the oncology team?

There is a clinical psychologist within the oncology service because it is recognised that when a child or young person has cancer it can be an extremely stressful, worrying and frightening time for everyone in the family. It is perfectly normal to experience any or all of these feelings and not everyone will need or want to see a psychologist. Family members may, however, find it beneficial to meet with the psychologist if the feelings are severe or have persisted over a long period of time. For example, it is normal to have feelings of worry, sadness and anger, but if these feelings are significantly affecting sleep, appetite or day-to-day activities, then the psychologist may be able to help with strategies to manage these feelings.

How can the clinical psychologist help me or my child?

The psychologist will see any member of the immediate family, or carer, either individually or with other family members. Every situation is different and is assessed individually. The clinical psychologist may work with children or young adults who are finding emotions difficult to manage or they may give advice on parenting a child or sibling. Sometimes the psychologist may work with the child or family if they are struggling with a particular procedure (e.g. anxiety about needles) or may help the family think about how they cope with and communicate about difficult issues.

What other roles does the clinical psychologist have within the oncology service?

The clinical psychologist works with staff to increase their understanding of common psychological reactions for children and parents with cancer and to support staff in providing

emotional care for families. The psychologist contributes to regular meetings in which the emotional, social and medical concerns of children and young people are discussed. The aims of the meetings are to ensure that families receive the best all-round care. The psychologist is also involved in teaching and training other staff so that the whole team can provide good psychological care.

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

If you have concerns about the service you receive from the psychologist, please discuss these first with the psychologist or another member of the paediatric intensive care unit team. If this does not address your concerns, please contact the head of psychological health services, Sue Dolby. You can contact her by telephone on 0117 342 8168. Or you can call the patient support and complaints team, which can be reached on 0117 342 3604.

What happens to the information I share with the clinical psychologist?

The clinical psychologist works as a member of the multidisciplinary team and communicates regularly with them to provide the best care. If there is reason to think that there is a risk of harm to you or others, this information may need to be passed on to other people. The psychologist will talk to you about this first whenever possible. If there is something that you tell the psychologist that you do not want them to share with anyone other than their supervisor, please let them know. We will always try to make sure that that information is kept private or confidential.

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, Braille, Audio, or Email, please call the Patient Information Service:
0117 342 3728 / 3725

