



How might I be helped with this type of support?

- Talking with a Clinical Psychologist can help you find different ways of coping or help you think about your problems in a more helpful way.

- You can talk about things you might find difficult discussing with family and friends, and you may find it useful to be able to show feelings such as anger, upset, and guilt.

- There are practical ways of dealing with anxiety and mood difficulties, and we can help you learn about and use these.

Is Psychological Therapy for me?

If you have been referred to the Macmillan Clinical Psychology Service, you will be able to discuss what might be helpful and decide on the way forward for you.

You can discuss which problems you want to tackle and which type of therapy, if any, is best for you. A Clinical Psychologist will not tell you what to do or think; they will work with you to identify and agree on goals.

Appointments or sessions with a Clinical Psychologist are usually weekly or fortnightly.

Each session typically lasts for about an hour, but may be shorter or longer. Sometimes a few sessions will be enough, whereas other people may need more.

Your Clinical Psychologist may work with you to:

- Help you to identify your strengths to find solutions to cope with current difficulties.
- Spot unhelpful patterns of behaviour in yourself, or in your relations with other people, and learn skills to address these.
- Help to recognise and challenge upsetting thoughts that may be affecting your life.
- Use relaxation and breathing exercises to reduce anxiety.
- Explore problem-solving strategies and other ways of coping.

Consent

We will only provide psychological support to those who ask for it or agree to be referred.

Your care will not be affected if you do not want to see a Clinical Psychologist. If you decide you do not want to continue with the sessions for any reason, you can stop at any time without your care being affected.



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Macmillan Cancer Support, registered charity number 261017. Isle of Man charity number 604.

Confidentiality

All personal information will be kept confidential.

After the assessment you will agree a plan with your Clinical Psychologist. A copy of this will be sent to you and professionals involved with your care.

If you do not wish to have information shared with other professionals involved in your medical care, the Clinical Psychologist will not share this information with others. The only time when information cannot be kept confidential is if there are concerns about your safety or the safety of others.

For more information contact the service directly on **01895 279374** or visit our website:

<http://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/service/hillingdon-hospital-macmillan-clinical-psychology-service-in-oncology-and-palliative-care/>

Tell us, we're listening!

Our staff want to know how they are doing. Tell us what you think at www.cnwl.nhs.uk/feedback and then we'll know what we have to do.

**WE'RE
HERE TO
SUPPORT
YOU**

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Hillingdon Clinical Psychology Service in Oncology and Palliative Care

Psychological support for patients diagnosed with cancer and other life-limiting illnesses, including support for carers

Central and North West London 
NHS Foundation Trust

When you or someone close to you has cancer or a life-limiting illness, it is natural to worry about what might happen. It can be a difficult time for everyone involved.

It is not unusual to have times when you feel very low after diagnosis. You may become distressed about the illness and worry about what the future holds. Sometimes the worry can be very intense and you may become anxious or depressed. Feelings of anger, fear, shock, and loss can be difficult to shake off.

Life-limiting illnesses can affect a person's family and friends as well as the person with the illness and this can cause difficulties or tensions in relationships.

Many issues can be dealt with through speaking to your medical team (e.g. your Clinical Nurse Specialist, GP or Consultant) however it may be that you want to talk to a Clinical Psychologist.

We have Clinical Psychologists based at Hillingdon Hospital who can offer support to you and/or your family to help deal with the emotional effects of cancer and life-limiting illnesses.

People who see a Clinical Psychologist sometimes worry that others might think they cannot cope, or have a mental illness. Seeing a Clinical Psychologist does not mean this. Feelings of losing hope or finding it difficult to cope are more common than you may realise.

At some point in our lives, almost everyone experiences anxiety, depression or problems they find hard to deal with. What you may experience in such times of stress is a worsening of normal feelings. Your problems may seem overwhelming, upsetting, or unmanageable to the point where they begin to disrupt your life.



How can I access psychological support?

Speak with your medical team, they will be able to refer you to the Clinical Psychology Service.

A Clinical Psychologist will contact you within a week, usually by telephone, to arrange an appointment.

What is a Clinical Psychologist?

Clinical Psychologists are trained to help people make sense of their thoughts and feelings and how they behave, particularly in stressful situations such as coping with cancer and coping with advanced illnesses.

A Clinical Psychologist has completed a degree in Psychology and has on-going training and experience in applied Psychology and Psychological Therapies. They differ from Psychiatrists and Doctors in that they do not prescribe medication.

What support is available to you?

- One-to-one psychological therapy sessions with a Clinical Psychologist.
- Sessions involving carers/relatives.
- Psychological support when you are in hospital, or as an outpatient.
- Home visits if you are unable to attend appointments at the hospital.
- Information and advice about other services available to you.
- Sensitivity to different cultural expectations concerning illness and care.

What sort of difficulties can a Clinical Psychologist help me with?

- Difficulties adjusting to being diagnosed with cancer or a life-limiting illness, including: anxieties, low mood, loss of self-confidence and difficulties coping.
- Difficulties that occur if cancer returns or an illness becomes worse.
- Adjusting to life after cancer.
- Difficulties during treatment, including feeling anxious about having a treatment and dealing with symptoms or side effects.
- Difficulties or tensions in your relationships with others which have arisen because of the illness.
- Problems about feeling anxious, low in mood or depressed, including unhelpful thinking and panic attacks.
- Psychological difficulties which may have been re-triggered or made worse by your illness.
- Difficulties experienced by people who are caring for someone who is unwell.