

Clinical psychology for children and young people with sickle cell and thalassaemia



Information for children, young people and families

This information sheet/leaflet explains the help and support the clinical psychology team provide for children and young people with sickle cell and thalassaemia. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the team caring for you.

Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

How we can help

The clinical psychology team can support you with managing your sickle cell disease or thalassaemia by helping with all kinds of difficulties, including:

- managing strong emotions, such as sadness, worry, fear or anger
- managing feelings related to your condition, such as being different
- managing pain
- helping you to make decisions about your treatment
- coping with hospital procedures such as needles, taking tablets, medical tests
- difficulties with taking medication
- wetting the bed (enuresis)
- eating and/or chewing things that are not food (pica)
- supporting your transition to adult services
- supporting your learning and education and liaising with schools
- neuropsychological assessments.

We do not...

- read minds
- wear white coats
- give you medicines, injections or examine you.

We do...

- like to talk to you
- ask about any problems that you have
- ask about your friends and hobbies
- talk about home and school life
- play games.

What is a clinical psychologist?

A clinical psychologist is specially trained to understand children's and young people's difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviour. We work



with the rest of the team at the hospital, including doctors, nurses and therapists.

We listen to children and young people and help them and their families manage the difficulties that can come from having sickle cell disease and thalassaemia.

What about my privacy and safety?

We keep what you say private, although other people such as your family, school or medical team might also find some of that information helpful. Before we share anything, we discuss what information you want to share and who you want to share it with.

The only time we share information without asking is if there's a safeguarding issue. This means we think you or someone else is at risk and we need to tell someone about it.

How can I get support from the clinical psychology team?

If you would like to speak with a member of our team, ask your consultant or clinical nurse specialist to refer you for psychological support. Or you can ask for the clinical psychologist to join your next appointment at the Children's Sickle Cell Disease and Thalassaemia Clinic at King's College Hospital.

What happens at my first appointment?

We talk to you and your family about your concerns and your usual ways of coping. We then make an assessment and tell you if we think some psychological support sessions are likely to be helpful. This first appointment lasts 90 minutes.

What happens at the psychological support sessions?

We help everybody differently and offer many therapies, but some of the things we do include:

- asking questions and talking about things that you have difficulties with, or that you might want help with
- asking you to keep a diary of certain feelings or behaviours
- playing special games or drawing
- asking you to fill in questionnaires.

We hold support sessions 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday, at the Belgrave Paediatric Liaison Service at King's College Hospital. Each session usually lasts for an hour. We sometimes have trainee clinical psychologists and students working with us.

Depending on your concerns, you may have an appointment every week, or every two weeks or more. Sessions often involve both you and your family. Other sessions might be with your parents on their own or with you on your own.

Who can I contact with queries or concerns?

Please speak to us if you have any concerns about your treatment. We want you to get the right support.

If you would like more information about our service, please contact Maria Goridari, clinical psychologist, National and Specialist CAMHS, Paediatric Liaison Service, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM).

Tel: **020 3299 2319**



PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS:

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **kch-tr.palsdh@nhs.net**

You can also contact us by using our online form at

www.kch.nhs.uk/contact/pals

PALS at Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ

Tel: **0800 731 2864 (Option 2)**

Email: **pals@slam.nhs.uk**

Web: **www.slam.nhs.uk/pals**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.



