

Cancer Psychological Care Team



A King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust specialist healthcare service



When you or somebody close to you has cancer, it can be a very difficult time. It is normal to experience a range of thoughts and feelings, although if these are new to you then they may not feel so normal. Many of us may need additional support to help manage the changes and challenges that come with a cancer diagnosis and cancer treatment.

Who are we?

We are an NHS service focusing on the psychological impact of cancer and cancer treatment. We are a specialist team, made up of psychologists and a psychiatrist, who support people accessing cancer services at King's College Hospital, as well as their friends and family.

How can we help?

The Cancer Psychological Care Team offers specialist input related to cancer and its impact, as part of your cancer care at King's. This input is tailored to your individual needs.

Common areas that a member of our team can discuss with you include:

- coping with emotions such as fear, sadness, anger, guilt, shame, and frustration and managing unfair self-criticism
- coping with uncertainty
- making decisions about cancer treatment
- managing the side effects of treatment, such as pain and fatigue
- balancing the demands of life with cancer treatment
- the impact of cancer and its treatment on relationships
- fears of cancer coming back or about death and dying
- adjusting to changes to your body and appearance
- concerns related to fertility and sexual functioning
- whether medication might be a helpful strategy to add to your coping tools to manage the emotional impact of cancer
- how cancer has impacted upon a pre-existing mental health issue and reviewing medication already prescribed for your mental health



What happens once I have been referred to the Cancer Psychological Care Team?

In most cases, a member of our team will contact you by telephone to discuss the service and ensure that it is the most appropriate one to meet your needs. If so, we will agree a date and time with you for an initial appointment. If we feel that another service is better placed to provide the help that you need, we will advise you how to access that service.

What happens during my initial appointment?

Initial appointments are up to one hour long and are delivered face to face, via video, or by telephone. We provide a safe environment to help you to make sense of the impact of cancer. You will be asked about your experiences of being diagnosed and accessing treatment, and how this has affected different areas of your life.

What happens after my initial appointment?

At the end of the initial appointment, you and your clinician will agree a plan together. Possible outcomes of the appointment are:

- a one-off appointment is sometimes all people need and/or you may be invited to an educational workshop
- you both agree that psychological therapy would help and identify your therapy goals and agree the number of sessions you will meet for (usually between 3 and 6 initially)
- for some people, it could be helpful to meet with the psychiatrist in the team to discuss medication or further support
- alternatively, we may feel that the best way we can support you is by helping your medical team to understand the psychological impact that cancer has for you – in this case, we might not arrange further appointments with you, but would instead meet with your medical team
- we may suggest a referral to an alternative service, if we feel that service is better placed to offer you the support you need

How can I access the service?

If you or a friend or family member are receiving cancer care at King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, then you can ask a member of your cancer care team to make a referral.

Other support at King's

King's Macmillan Information and Support Centre

Ground floor, Cicely Saunders Institute, King's College Hospital

Tel: **020 3299 5228**

Email: **kch-tr.macmillan1@nhs.net**

Urgent medical problems

The Cancer Psychological Care Team is not an urgent response service. If you require more immediate mental health support, please contact your local crisis service (numbers below) or contact your GP. If you require urgent medical or emotional support, please attend your nearest Accident and Emergency Department or call 999.

If you live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, or Croydon – South London and Maudsley Mental Health Crisis Line - Tel: 0800 731 2864 Option 1.

If you live in Greenwich, Bexley, or Bromley - Oxleas Mental Health Crisis Line - Tel: 0800 330 8590.

Sharing your information

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has partnered with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust through the King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre. We are working together to give our patients the best possible care, so you might find we invite you for appointments at Guy's or St Thomas' hospitals. King's College Hospital and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts share an



electronic patient record system, which means information about your health record can be accessed safely and securely by health and care staff at both Trusts. For more information visit www.kch.nhs.uk.

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. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

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

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

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

PALS at Princess Royal University Hospital, Farnborough Common, Orpington, Kent BR6 8ND

Tel: **01689 863252**

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

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Communications and Interpreting telephone line on 020 3299 4826 or email kch-tr.accessibility@nhs.net



