



Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust: Information for Families

## **The Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) Psychology Service: information for families**

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**This information sheet from Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) explains how the BMT Psychology team can help you and your family before, during and after bone marrow transplant (BMT).**

### **Who are Clinical Psychologists?**

Clinical Psychologists work with children and their families to help them cope with their medical condition. They also provide support around managing hospital admissions and the challenges which can be associated with being in hospital.

We listen to your concerns and work with you to make the situation more manageable. We can also offer emotional support to you, your child and your family. We are not medical doctors and do not prescribe medication or do any physical examinations.

The Psychologists who work with the Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT) team are part of a wider team of Psychologists who work in Oncology, Haematology, Immunology and Palliative Care

### **What is the role of a Clinical Psychologist in the BMT team?**

#### **Before the BMT**

Before your child has their BMT, we aim to meet with you virtually in our Allied Health Professionals Pre-BMT clinic to talk through the procedure and any worries you or your child may have. We have found that having the chance to meet with you beforehand and prepare for treatment like this can help the family with their transition to the admission and BMT treatment.

This may include thinking about how you plan and prepare for being on the ward, what information you give your children and how you can look after yourselves during this time too.

#### **During the BMT**

During your child's time in hospital, we can arrange to visit you on the ward if you have concerns about how you or your child are managing during transplant. At this time, we might work with your child around issues such as difficulties managing procedures, low mood, anxieties and problems around feeding and sleeping. We can also meet you before discharge to plan going home.

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**This document must be read in conjunction with all Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Policies and Procedures.**

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## After the BMT

If there are problems after your child's transplant then we can continue to offer support to your family. This may include helping you settle back into family life at home or helping your child settle at school

## Who do Clinical Psychologists see?

We can see anyone in the family, including the child or young person who is undergoing the BMT, any brothers/sisters, parents and wider family members.

We can work with individuals, couples and families all together.

## When can a Clinical Psychologist help?

We understand that a child's illness or condition can affect the whole family in a variety of ways and that having a BMT can be particularly stressful.

Some examples of what we can help with include:

- Managing the physical and emotional feelings caused by the medical treatments and their effects for example, low mood, side-effects, pain or anxiety with procedures
- Managing stress
- Coping with being away from home and being in hospital.
- Planning and thinking about the future.
- Finding ways to juggle illness and everyday life
- Answering questions asked by the child and others about their illness
- Providing parents with support to deal with behavioural difficulties
- Managing relationships with family, friends and other professionals
- Coping with uncertainty and difficult news
- Bereavement support

## Are our discussions confidential?

Your conversations with us will remain confidential within the hospital team caring for your child. However there might be times when it is important for us to share information outside the hospital.

If there is any information that you would prefer us not to share, we are happy to discuss this with you. Please be aware that we will pass on information to other organisations if we believe someone could be at risk – we will do our best to talk to you about this but we have a duty of care to share information in these circumstances.

## How do you contact us?

Ask a member of the staff team to make a referral to Psychology or ask to speak to a Psychologist via the Psychology administrators on 0207 405 9200 extension 5166.

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