

The Paediatric Psychology Team at GOSH



What is the Paediatric Psychology Team?

At GOSH there are clinical psychologists who work with different wards and medical teams. The word 'Paediatric' just means that we work specifically with children and young people with medical conditions.

Information for young people

Why have I been referred?

Perhaps someone in your medical team, or someone in your family, thought it would be useful for you to talk to someone. They may have noticed that you looked down, stressed, irritable or worried. You may even have asked to talk to someone yourself.

We can help with all sorts of things:

- Talking with your friends about your health
- Helping you cope with painful procedures
- Feeling different from other people
- Understanding your condition and how the doctors treat it
- Helping with school problems like learning and concentrating in the classroom
- Coping with upsetting news
- Having someone to talk to if you are unhappy about being in hospital
- Helping you cope with things you find stressful

How are we trained?

We have a degree in psychology and then another qualification (usually a doctorate – like a PhD) in Clinical Psychology. Though you may see ‘Dr’ in front of our names, we do not give injections, medicines, or do operations. We have been trained to make it as easy as possible to talk openly about whatever may be on your mind or worrying you.

We can help people when they feel miserable, scared, angry, confused or unhappy by helping them to understand and break-out of unhelpful patterns of thinking or behaving. Often young people come to us to talk about their illness or health problem, so they can learn different ways to cope with it.

We will always spend time listening to your point of view and will always be respectful and non-judgemental.

Will other people know I am talking to a psychologist?

Because we are part of the hospital team, we will always let your doctor or nurse know we have seen you, but we will only let them know what we have talked about if you want.

There is only one exception to this rule and that is if we are worried about your (or others) health or safety.

We won't tell your friends or your teachers without your permission. At your first appointment, you and your psychologist can decide together what will or won't be shared with your parents.

What will happen at my first appointment/assessment session?

Usually appointments last about an hour, though sometimes this varies. You will have the choice of talking on your own or with some of your family too, you are welcome to bring anyone with you if you want. Your psychologist will ask what you prefer when you first meet them or they may explain how the appointment will run.

The psychologist will arrange a private room or space (even at your bedside) where you can talk. When you first meet with your psychologist he or she will invite you to talk about what's going on for you – you can also ask any questions that you like.

Your psychologist will be keen on hearing about what you want to be different in your life and what you feel are realistic goals. We will always work together with you, as a team, we will not blame you for the difficulties that you may be going through, but will try to understand and help you identify your strengths. Together we may also find new and different ways of coping.

Most young people say that they feel more comfortable about talking as the appointment goes on. At the end of the appointment you and your psychologist will make a plan for future appointments. If you live far away, or are leaving the hospital, then we can talk about different options to continue your progress.



If you want to talk to a member of the Paediatric Psychology Team, please ask your doctor or nurse to arrange this.

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