Macmillan Psychological Therapies Team

Providing support for patients and their families

at the Sussex Cancer Centre
The diagnosis and treatment of cancer is a disturbing experience for most people and can have a devastating impact on quality of life – not just for the individual, but also their family and carers. In some ways, dealing with the emotions can feel just as difficult as coping with the physical aspects of the disease.

People with cancer face uncertainty and may have to undergo physically and psychologically distressing treatments.

Psychological distress is an understandable and natural response to any traumatic or life threatening experience and is common amongst people diagnosed with cancer.

Who are the Macmillan Psychological Therapies Team?

The Macmillan Psychological Therapies Team provide a range of evidence-based psychological therapies for patients with cancer and their families who are attending, or have attended the Sussex Cancer Centre.

Laura Pritchard is an experienced counsellor, psychotherapist and hypnotherapist and has a background of working as a cancer nurse specialist with over 20 year’s experience.

Mark Craven is a registered Counselling Psychologist with a background in adult mental health who applies psychological knowledge, theory and research to help people meet the challenges commonly faced during their cancer journey.

There are also a number of qualified volunteer counsellors and therapists in the team who are trained to work with patients and families who have a cancer diagnosis.

Why might accessing this service help me?

**Diagnosis and treatment**

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Though each individual will experience cancer differently, people often experience changes in four areas:

- **Thinking** – e.g. focussing on symptoms of distress (rumination) or making efforts to keep oneself from thinking about cancer (avoidance).
- **Feelings** – e.g. shock, numbness, fear, anxiety, depression, anger, irritability, guilt, helplessness, powerlessness, lack of control.
- **Bodily changes** – including muscle tension and pain, nausea and dizziness.
- **Behavioural changes** – including irritability, disturbed sleep or eating habits, social withdrawal, or seeking reassurance from others.
After Treatment
Psychological and emotional adjustment sometimes takes longer than the physical recovery, and the end of treatment can be a difficult time as people try to make sense of their experience and re-adjust to ‘normal’ life. Fear of recurrence can surface and impact on well-being.

The Macmillan Psychological Therapies team can help people adjust emotionally and meet the psychological challenges commonly faced by people during their cancer journey, such as; anxiety, depression, family and relationships issues, uncertainty, and treatment side-effects.

What does the service offer?
We offer information, support and the opportunity to discuss any concerns. The psychological therapies team uses a range of evidence-based talking therapies that include:

- Specialist cancer counselling
- Couples therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Hypnotherapy
- Telephone counselling
- Psychosexual therapy
- Relaxation and guided visualisation
- Informal psychological support and advice
- EMDR (eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing)
- Mindfulness-based interventions and drop-in group
- Psycho-educational recovery group
- Self-help techniques

Please ask for further explanation of these therapies if needed.

What to expect/who is the service for?
You can expect to be offered an assessment appointment with either Mark or Laura at the earliest point available and at a time that is convenient to you. Sometimes there is a waiting list and urgent referrals will be prioritised. At this appointment you will be given the opportunity to talk privately and confidentially about your situation. After assessment they will decide the most appropriate way forward. You may be offered further appointments with one of the other therapists or ongoing appointments may be with Mark or Laura depending on what is best for you and which psychological therapy you are offered. Each session is 50 minutes and will focus on cancer related issues. All members of the team are bound by Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS policies regarding confidentiality and record keeping and adhere to either the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), British Psychological Society (BPS) or British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) professional code of ethics. Therefore all sessions are completely confidential.

How do I access this service?
Referrals can be made by any health care worker or by self referral. The service is free and appointments are offered from Monday to Friday. It is available to adults diagnosed with cancer and close family
members who live in the Brighton and Hove area and who are currently or have in the past attended the Sussex Cancer Centre. It is also available for people who live across Sussex that are currently receiving treatment in the Sussex Cancer Centre. We encourage referrals from all members of the community and a translation service is available.

Contact Mark Craven or Laura Pritchard on 01273 664694 – if we are not free to take your call please leave a message on our answer phone.

Useful National Contacts

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP):
0870 443 5252  www.bacp.co.uk

COSRT (College for Sexual and Relationship Therapy)
0208 543 2707  www.cosrt.org.uk

UKCP (United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy)
0207 436 3002  wwwpsychotherapy.org.uk

(BPS) British Psychological Society
www.bps.org.uk

Samaritans
0845 790 9090
www.samaritans.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support:
0808 808 2020  www.macmillan.org.uk

Sussex Mental Healthline
Available Monday to Friday
5pm – 9am, and 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays.  0300 5000 101

Cancer Counselling Trust
www.cancercounselling.org.uk

Sussex Cancer Centre
Reception 01273 696955 Ext. 4324

Chemotherapy reception
01273 696955 Ext. 4799

Radiotherapy reception
01273 696955 Ext. 4091

Hospital Macmillan Nurses
01273 664693

Macmillan Psychological Therapies Team 01273 664694

Carers Centre for Brighton and Hove
01273 746222
http://www.thecarerscentre.org/

If you do not understand this leaflet, we can arrange for an interpreter.
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carer and patient information group approved