



Queen Victoria Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

Cancer Services

Department of Psychological Therapies



About us

We understand that the diagnosis and treatment of cancer can have a big impact on your quality of life. We offer support for people living with and beyond cancer who are receiving care at Queen Victoria Hospital to help with cancer-related psychological difficulties.

This service is provided by clinical psychologists, psychotherapists and trainee clinical psychologists based at Queen Victoria Hospital. The team specialise in supporting people who have cancer as well as those who have completed their cancer treatment. Psychological approaches can be helpful in managing difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

We offer sessions by telephone, video call and face-to-face and will tailor your treatment to your individual needs.

The sorts of difficulties we can help you with include:

- Making decisions about surgical treatments
- Coping with adjustment, change and loss
- Living with uncertainty, including fear of recurrence
- Coping with how cancer affects relationships and sex
- Feelings of 'stuckness' and finding it hard to move forward
- Balancing self-care with work, home and family life
- Feelings of depression, anxiety, trauma and anger
- Feeling unhappy about changes in appearance
- Coping with the impact on self-esteem, confidence and identity
- Talking to children about cancer

How can we help you?

We work with people by providing a safe space to talk through problems and issues, developing a shared understanding of your concerns, and helping to find new ways of managing difficult thoughts and feelings.

Appointments with our team can:

- Give you time to think about what is important to you in your life and support you to set yourself manageable goals
- Provide a space to support you with decision-making about surgery and other treatment options
- Help you to access other services which may be of use to you

We offer a range of therapies including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), Mindfulness and Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing (EMDR). We do not prescribe medication.

What can I expect?

In the initial session the therapist will ask you about your concerns so that they understand the difficulties you are experiencing. We will also ask you about your wellbeing in the past and any other significant life events, as well as what helps you cope with challenges. This helps us better to understand what support might be useful for you.

You may also receive some short questionnaires to fill in. These help us understand your individual needs and difficulties.

At the end of the first appointment you and the therapist will make a plan together about the next steps:

- You may decide that you do not need or want therapy sessions.
- You may find you would benefit from a few consultations with a therapist to help get you 'back on track' if you feel you are struggling, or to have some support with decision making.
- You may benefit from a course of an evidence-based talking therapy intervention and may be offered a number of appointments. These will usually be weekly or fortnightly, for about 50 minutes each.
- With your consent, you may be referred on to a different service that better meets your needs. We can help you find the right support in your local community.

Appointments are completely optional. If you wish to opt out of therapy, you can do so at any time.

If you would like to speak to us about options for support, you can contact our team:

By calling - **01342 414478**

By e-mailing - qvh.psychologicaltherapy@nhs.net

Further sources of information

Websites and support networks

- **Macmillan** - www.macmillan.org.uk
- **Cancer Research UK** - www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping
- **Breast Cancer now.** <https://breastcancernow.org> - Breast Cancer Now offer the 'Someone Like Me service' and will put you in touch with someone else who's had or been affected by breast cancer. They also have online groups.
- **Younger Breast Cancer Network** (UK) Facebook group.
- **Flat Friends** www.flatfriends.org.uk - Dedicated to supporting women who have had single or double mastectomy surgery without breast reconstruction, including those who may face such decisions now
- **Melanoma UK** www.melanomauk.org.uk – Provides options to support patients, carers, family and friends and regain control. Receive social, emotional, and practical support throughout your cancer journey with Melanoma UK and their support network.
- **The Mouth Cancer Foundation** <https://www.mouthcancerfoundation.org> – Hosts a weekly patient and carer online meeting. This is a social evening, in a relaxed setting, to chat and support those dealing with head and neck cancer.

Books

- **The Cancer Survivor's Companion: Practical ways to cope with your feelings after cancer** by Frances Godheart & Lucy Atkins
- **Facing the Storm: using CBT, Mindfulness and Acceptance to build resilience when your world's falling apart** by Ray Own
- **Living your life with cancer through Acceptance and Commitment Therapy** by Anne Johnson

Apps

These apps are not specifically designed for cancer support but are useful tools to help support your emotional wellbeing. You can find them in your usual App store.

- **WorryTree:** aims to help you take control of worry wherever you are.
- **Feeling Good:** relax your body and mind with a series of audio tracks designed to help you build confidence, energy and a positive mindset.
- **Stress & Anxiety Companion:** helps you handle stress and anxiety on-the-go. Using breathing exercises, relaxing music and games designed to calm the mind, the app helps you change negative thoughts to help you better cope with life's ups and downs.
- **Calm Harm:** designed to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm. It is private and password protected.



If you'd like to find out how you can support QVH,
please visit www.supportqvh.org



Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or a
different format.

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