

## Department of Clinical Psychology

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**Accessing  
psychological support  
for people with a life  
limiting illness**

Patient information leaflet

**This leaflet is available in alternative languages/formats  
on request.**

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## Why Might someone need psychological support?

Living with a life limiting illness can be an extremely difficult and stressful time. **Almost everyone** will feel shocked and upset at some time during their illness. For many people these feelings improve over time with support from their healthcare team, family and friends.



Everybody copes in a slightly different way and there is **no right or wrong way** to feel. However, if you find that the way you are feeling is **beginning to interfere** with your everyday life, it could be helpful to ask for some extra support with the emotional side of your illness, as well as the physical support you already receive from your healthcare team.

Some examples of problems that you could ask for help with:

- Coming to terms and coping with illness
- Feeling low or worried
- Changes to how you feel about yourself or other people
- Coping with physical symptoms and medical treatment
- Coping with uncertainty, change and loss



## What should I do if I think I would like extra support?

If you live in **St Helens, Knowsley** or **Halton**, your local psychological services are based at **St Helens Hospital**.

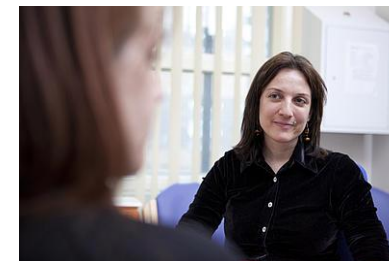
- Talk to your GP or the consultant that you see at the hospital or hospice. They will be able to make a referral for you.



If you do not live in St Helens, Knowsley or Halton, please ask your GP how to access psychological services where you live.

## What can I expect from Psychology Services?

The psychologists in the team are experienced at dealing with the emotional impact of health difficulties, including life limiting illnesses. They will talk to you about how you have been feeling and help you to think about what has happened to you. There are a range of therapies that could be offered to help you cope with your illness.



You are likely to be offered an assessment session in which you will be asked about your experiences, your current difficulties, and the impact that these have had on your life. A plan of action would then be agreed between yourself and your therapist.

### **Other sources of support**

If you would like to speak to somebody you could also call the confidential helpline run by:

**Macmillan Cancer Support**  
**0808 808 0000**

Alternatively, the local hospices are able to provide support and advice. A range of healthcare professionals work within hospices to support people at various stages of a life limiting illness, services might include complementary therapies, medical advice, and therapy groups:

**Halton Haven**  
**01928 712728**

<http://www.haltonhaven.co.uk/>

**Willowbrook**  
**0151 430 8736**

<http://www.willowbrook.org.uk/>