

## Information sharing

Clinical psychologists receive information about you from the nurse or consultant who refers you. If you agree, the psychologist may share information about your therapy with the Sexual Health Team to help them support you. If you agree, the psychologist may also share information with your GP. You can discuss this with the psychologist in your assessment appointment.

The psychologist will keep what you say to them confidential, unless you tell them something that means there is a risk to you or someone else. Psychologists have to act to prevent harm to you and others and so would only break your confidentiality if they need to do this to keep you and/or other people safe.

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# Clinical psychology for people with HIV

This leaflet can be made available  
in alternative languages / formats on request.

如有需要，本传单可提供其他语言/版式  
此單張的其他語言/格式版本可按要求提供

Na żądanie ta ulotka może zostać udostępniona  
w innych językach/formatach.

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## Living with HIV

With modern treatments people with HIV can live long, active and satisfying lives. However, HIV can still be difficult to live with.

Problems can include:

- Difficult emotions e.g. sadness, depression, anger, anxiety or shame about HIV
- Problems with taking HIV medication consistently
- Worries about HIV stigma and bullying
- Deciding who to tell about HIV
- Isolation and loneliness related to HIV
- Life changes related to HIV
- Health changes due to HIV
- Intrusive or upsetting memories or images about HIV
- Wanting to avoid everything to do with HIV.

If you experience any of the problems above or different problems related to having HIV and you want to talk to a professional, a clinical psychologist may be able to help.

Clinical psychologists work with people using 'talking therapies'.

### What does a clinical psychologist do?

A psychologist may:

- Ask you about your problems and what you have tried so far
- Listen to you
- Encourage you to think about your problems in different ways
- Help you find ways to make things better or easier to manage
- Help you find ways to cope

The type of talking therapy will depend on your particular problems and circumstances.

We do not currently offer any support groups.

### What would I have to do?

You need to be referred by a nurse or consultant from the Sexual Health Team. You would need to attend an assessment appointment in the Clinical Psychology Department. If this is the right service you will be invited to attend further appointments to talk about your problems. The psychologist will help you to come up with some goals to work towards in therapy. The psychologist will encourage you to try things out between sessions (e.g. relaxation skills, facing a fear, keeping a thought diary). You will not be pressured to do anything you do not want to do. You can stop attending therapy at any time. To benefit from therapy, attending regularly is important. If attending will be a problem, then now may not be the right time for you to start therapy. You will be discharged from the Clinical Psychology Department if you miss 2 consecutive appointments without calling to cancel or rearrange. If you cancel a lot of appointments you are unlikely to benefit from therapy and so the psychologist will discharge you.

### How long does it last?

Appointments last around 50mins to an hour. The number of appointments will depend on your individual circumstances, but most people have less than 24 sessions. Some people make changes with only a few sessions. Usually, the psychologist will work out how many sessions you need by discussing your progress with you. You may attend only for one assessment session and then decide not to have therapy.

### Where is it?

The Clinical Psychology Department is in the orange zone on the lower ground floor of St Helens Hospital (the same floor as the Sexual Health Clinic).