

## 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 must 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 emotional difficulties related to having HIV and you want to talk to a professional, a Clinical Psychologist may be able to help.

### What does a clinical psychologist do?

Clinical psychologists work with people using 'talking therapies' such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Compassion Focussed Therapy (CFT) or Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR). 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

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. We will invite you to an assessment appointment (usually by telephone or video call due to current social distancing). If you do not have a private space at home, we will try to offer you an appointment in the Clinical Psychology department. If this is the right service you will be invited to attend further appointments.

The psychologist will help you to choose some goals to work on 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. You can be re-referred in future.

### How long does it last?

Appointments last between 45-90mins. Most people have between 6-12 sessions. Some people make big changes within a few sessions. The psychologist will discuss how many sessions you need with you. You may attend an assessment session and then decide not to have therapy or be directed to another service.

### 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).