

- **Sahir House** - A charity providing support and services to those living with and effected by HIV across Merseyside.

Website: <http://www.sahir.org.uk>
Telephone number 0151 673 1972
Email: info@sahir.uk.com

- **Positively UK** - A national charity dedicated to protecting the health and wellbeing of people living with HIV through tailored peer support, advocacy for positive attitudes, and equitable access to healthcare.

Website: <https://positivelyuk.org>

- **Clinical psychology department**, orange zone, St Helens hospital telephone: 01744 646864. More information can be found about our department by scanning this QR code.



St Helens Hospital
Marshalls Cross Road,
St Helens,
Merseyside,
WA9 3DA
Telephone: 01744 26633

www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk

Clinical psychology for people living with HIV

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Author: Consultant
Department: Clinical psychology
Document Number: MWL2414
Version: 001
Review Date: 30/11/2027

With modern treatments people with HIV can live long, active and satisfying lives. However, being diagnosed with and living with HIV can still be a difficult experience. 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

Accessing support

If you experience any of the above problems or different emotional difficulties related to having HIV, you can discuss this with your nurse or consultant. They can provide support, and discuss the options that are available in your area. This might include: local support groups, counselling services or psychological therapy. There is a clinical psychology service for people living with HIV, who are under the care of the sexual health team based at St Helens Hospital. Your nurse or consultant can refer you to us.

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.

Once referred to the psychology service, you are likely to be offered an assessment session. In which you will be asked about your current difficulties, experience of HIV and the impact that this has had on your life. A plan would then be agreed between you and your therapist based upon your hopes and goals.

Sessions usually last about 50 minutes and can be via video, telephone or in person at St Helens Hospital (determined by your circumstances and preferences). There are a range of therapies that could be offered to help you to understand and cope with the emotional impact of your HIV diagnosis such as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Compassion Focussed Therapy (CFT) or Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing therapy (EMDR).

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