



University  
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# the alex

## Paediatric Oncology Psychology Service



Information for parents and carers

## **What is this information about?**

This information is about the Paediatric Oncology Psychology Service. It tells you who the team are and what support we offer as a service.

## **Why have I been given this information?**

It is normal for families to feel overwhelmed or struggle with the impact of a cancer diagnosis and treatment. The Paediatric Oncology Psychology Service are here to listen and support you, emotionally and psychologically, if you feel you need it.

You may find that you have already been given a lot of information and are not ready to read this yet. Please do not feel you have to look at this information now, but you may find it helpful to keep it in a safe place so you can find out more about the service later on.

The service contact details are at the end of this information.

## **What does the Paediatric Oncology Psychology Service do?**

We offer support to children and young people up to 19 years old, and their families, to help cope with the emotional and psychological impact of cancer diagnosis and treatment.

The service offers psychology assessment and therapy. This can start as soon as diagnosis is given, anytime throughout the treatment plan or after treatment finishes.

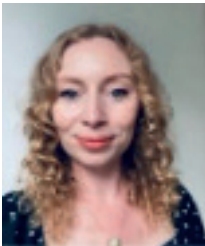
# Who is in the team?

The team includes:



**Dr Alice Emond**

Principal Clinical Psychologist and Service Lead



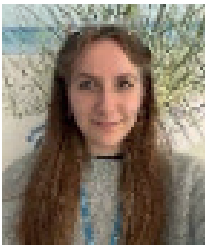
**Dr Meg Montgomery**

Clinical Psychologist



**Dr Hannah Smith**

Rockinghorse Senior Counselling Psychologist



**Aimee Sullivan**

Service Administrator

We are based on level 9 oncology daycare. We also have access to therapy rooms on Level 10 at the Alex.

# What do paediatric oncology psychologists do?

We work with you and your family to help you to understand and cope with the cancer diagnosis or treatment.

We create a support plan together with you and your family.

## Things that we can support you with include:

- Understanding and managing your wellbeing
- Coping with the impact of diagnosis and treatment
- Managing medical procedures and treatment side-effects
- Understanding and coping with difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours
- Changes around school and work
- Difficult memories from experiences with treatment
- Living life alongside treatment.

We work together with other people who are looking after you. This includes your team of doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff at the Alex and at your main treatment hospital.

We also work with other people who are important to you: this includes people at your school, nursery, or charities.

# What happens during a psychology appointment?

## Wellbeing assessments

All families are offered two routine family wellbeing assessments, at the start and at the end of treatment.

Wellbeing assessments are open to all family members. These sessions are with a psychologist, and they discuss how you feel you are coping with treatment and if any other support might be helpful.

Other support could include self-help resources, individual or family therapy referrals to our service, or signposting to other services.

## Therapy referrals

If you or a member of the family needs some psychology support, they can be referred to the psychology team for some therapy sessions. This includes siblings, parents or carers.

Referrals for yourself, siblings, parents or carers can be made directly by families themselves, by your medical team, or other professionals. Referrals for therapy will always be discussed first with whoever the referral is for.

Following an assessment, we can offer six to 12 sessions of 50 minutes each, which can be in person, by video or telephone. We try to link in with any medical appointments with the oncology daycare department to reduce your visits to the hospital.

## How has this service helped other people?

"It's really helped my son to understand his sister's condition and his own feelings." (Sibling)

"(The psychologist) allowed our child to discuss how they were feeling and come to terms with their treatment changes."  
(Parent)

"I feel I have taken time to reflect, and this has given me the tools and space to continue processing and dealing with what's to come." (Parent)

"Has been extremely helpful in coping during my treatment and being able to talk about it with my family in a better way"  
(Patient)

## Where can I look for more information and resources?

We are not a crisis mental health service. If you have urgent mental health concerns, please visit A&E or call the Sussex mental health line via **NHS 111**.

### Teens Unite

Support and information for young people who have experienced a cancer diagnosis and their families.

[www.teensunite.org/](http://www.teensunite.org/)

### Young Minds

Resources for young people and parents/carers to support with general mental health and wellbeing.

[www.youngminds.org.uk/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/)

## Brighton and Hove e-wellbeing

Resources and local community-based information.

<https://e-wellbeing.co.uk/>

If you would like further resources, please contact our team directly.



Figure 1. Therapy room on Level 9 Oncology Day Care



Figure 2. Therapy room on Level 10  
'The Blue Room'

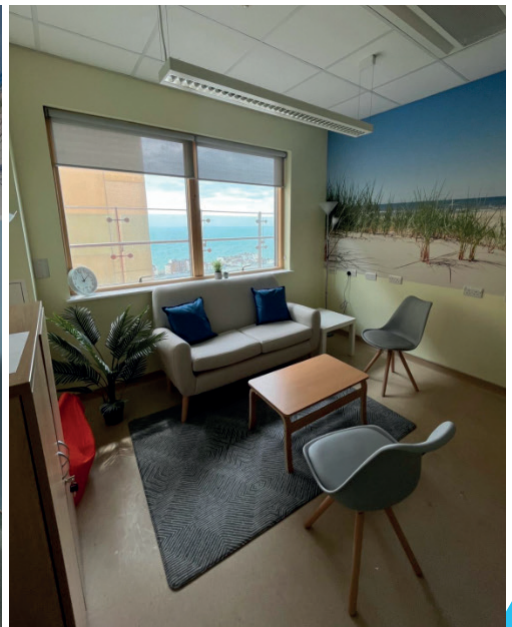


Figure 3. Therapy room on Level 10  
'The Yellow Room'

# Who can I contact for further information and advice?

To make a direct referral or enquiry about our service  
[uhsussex.paedoncpsych@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.paedoncpsych@nhs.net)

Administrator **01273 696955 Ext. 62406**



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in Brighton and Hove.

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