

Oxford University Hospitals **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Oxford Kidney Unit and Transplant Centre

# Clinical Psychology Service

Information for patients



This leaflet will provide you with information about the Clinical Psychology service for kidney and transplant patients. Please speak to your doctor or nurse if you need further information.

## What is a clinical psychologist?

Clinical psychologists can help people and their families cope with extraordinary circumstances, such as having a serious and/or long term condition.

They are not medical doctors like psychiatrists and do not prescribe medication or admit people to hospital.

They spend at least 6 years training before qualifying, and are approved by the Health and Care Professions Council.

The clinical psychologist will listen to what you have to say and explore your problems and concerns.

They will work with you to focus on your strengths and resources, supporting you to find ways to live well alongside the effects of your health problems.

## Who is the service for?

If you receive treatment in the Oxford Transplant Centre or Oxford Kidney Unit (including our satellite units) you are eligible for this service. A clinical psychologist can also work with your family and carers. They also support people who are planning to donate a kidney.

## How could a clinical psychologist help me?

Having kidney failure may affect you in many different ways. For example, you might experience some of the following:

- fear, anger, sadness, depression, loss and other reactions. These feelings are quite normal and often come and go. Sometimes they can feel quite overwhelming.
- difficulty adjusting to change, in all areas of life
- a change to your relationships; it may be hard to communicate with others about your health problems
- feeling overwhelmed by things you previously felt comfortable with, leaving you feeling stressed
- the strategies you usually use to manage difficulties (which work in the short-term) creating more problems in the future.

People find different ways to manage challenging times. Some people seek help from family, friends, their GP and Renal Unit staff. However, sometimes discussing these issues with an experienced listening professional can be an important source of support. The clinical psychologist is here to provide emotional and psychological support to you and your family.

## Will you need to share information about me with other people?

The clinical psychologist operates as part of a multidisciplinary team, and supports patients with all aspects of their health. Information will be shared with other members of the team if it is felt that this will help staff support you physically, mentally and socially. This will be discussed with you at your first appointment and you always have the right to ask for things to remain confidential.

If the clinical psychologist is concerned that you or another person are at risk, they are duty bound to tell the relevant professionals.

## What should I do if I would like to talk to a clinical psychologist?

Please let your nurse or doctor know that you would like to be referred to a clinical psychologist.

## What happens after I have been referred?

To make sure that you haven't changed your mind, the clinical psychologist will send you a letter asking you to confirm that you would like an appointment. When you have confirmed you would like to be seen, you will be sent an appointment as soon as one becomes available.

The first appointment will last approximately 1 hour. It's an opportunity for you to discuss the problems you would like support with, and to decide what kind of help will be the most useful.

This appointment may be a one-off, or you may agree to meet again. It's normal to meet with a clinical psychologist for several sessions; this may be weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

If an alternative service may be more appropriate for you, the clinical psychologist can help you with this.

The clinical psychologist is based at the Oxford Kidney Unit and also has clinics in the satellite units. We will do our best to offer you appointments at a location which is convenient for you.

## Where else can I seek help?

There is a dedicated Kidney Patient Advisor in the unit. They can provide advice and support on a range of personal, emotional and practical matters. If you wish to speak to a Kidney Patient Advisor, please ask your kidney team. There is a separate leaflet about this service available; please ask your kidney team for a copy.

## Other sources of useful information

### **Oxford Kidney Unit**

Useful information about the Oxford Kidney unit for patients and relatives.

Website: [www.ouh.nhs.uk/oku](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/oku)

### **Kidney Patient Guide**

Information about the emotional effects of kidney disease.

Website: [www.kidneypatientguide.org.uk/emotional.php](http://www.kidneypatientguide.org.uk/emotional.php)

### **NHS Choices – Talking therapies**

Talking therapy is for anyone who's going through a bad time or has emotional problems they can't sort out on their own. For more information in your local area see:

Website: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/benefits-of-talking-therapy.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/benefits-of-talking-therapy.aspx)

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter,  
a document in Easy Read, another language, large print,  
Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473**  
or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

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