

## **Who is the service for?**

This is a dedicated regional psychological service delivered within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust for individuals (18 years and above) who have been infected and affected as a result of receiving contaminated blood. The service is also for family members. The service provides an assessment of an individual's psychological needs. Where a negative impact on an individual's emotional well-being has been identified therapy and support can be provided. This may be in the form of a brief or longer contact.

## **Who provides the service?**

A Specialist Clinical Psychologist will provide the service. A Clinical Psychologist is specifically trained and professionally qualified to help people with a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties connected to their life circumstances.

## **How might the Clinical Psychology Service help?**

Experiencing a long-term physical health condition can have many effects on an individual and those closest to them. This can occur for many reasons and can include changes in symptoms and/or impact of treatment interventions previously or currently recommended.

A Clinical Psychologist works to help a person gain an understanding of the reasons that are having an impact on their psychological well-being. They also explore and promote new ways of coping to maximise quality of life.

Common psychological difficulties associated with a physical health condition and associated treatment provided may include:

- Low mood/Sadness
- Worries/Anxiety/Stress
- Coping with health uncertainty, difficult treatment and hospital admissions
- Adjustment stress to new health problems and their consequences on everyday life
- Problems associated with treatment
- Grief and loss
- Bereavement
- Managing upsetting memories
- Sleep difficulties
- Low self-esteem/confidence
- Anger and Frustration

In relation to the Inquiry:

- The personal impact of preparing for the Inquiry and perhaps learning new information about oneself and others
- Providing evidence during The Inquiry
- Listening to information provided by others
- The decisions made by The Inquiry and others

## **What does seeing a Clinical Psychologist involve?**

Your first appointment with the Clinical Psychologist will involve an assessment. This is the chance for the Clinical Psychologist to learn about you and your unique experiences in relation to your health, family, life circumstances and any impacts from The Inquiry. Self-report questionnaires can be used to help the Clinical Psychologist gather information. Meetings will last about an hour.

Following the assessment a summary of the main concerns and suggestions as to what might be helpful will be discussed with you such as:

- a proposal of a number of individual therapy sessions
- referral to the Complementary Therapies Service for additional intervention for improving wellbeing
- possible onward referral to a more appropriate service if you agree
- no further action at this time

## **Is it Confidential?**

Notes are taken during the appointments to guide the therapeutic work. Notes are kept confidentially and securely. A brief letter will be sent to the referrer and any agreed others after the assessment and at the end of contact. The information contained within these letters will be discussed with you.

The Clinical Psychologist may liaise with medical teams or GPs if sharing knowledge will enable you to receive better medical, nursing and or social care or maintain safety of individuals involved. Information sharing will always be discussed with you.

### **Attendance**

For therapy to be of benefit it is important that all arranged appointments are attended. Appointments can be offered face to face, online via Microsoft Teams or the telephone. Face to face appointments are offered at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast.

If you experience doubts about attending appointments during therapy please talk to your therapist at these times to ensure you are getting the best out of therapy. Failure to attend appointments without contacting us will normally result in discharge from the service. If you cancel and/or do not attend two consecutive appointments, you will normally be discharged from the service. If you have any questions about the Trust's Attendance Policy please do not hesitate ask.

Leaflet drafted by the Clinical Psychology Service for Individuals and their Families Infected/Affected by Contaminated Blood.

Dated: April 2021



## **Clinical Psychology Service for Individuals and their Families Infected /Affected by receiving Contaminated Blood**

**Information for Individuals and their  
Family Members**

### **Contact Details**

Clinical Health Psychology Department  
**Telephone Number:** (028) 9615 5867

### **Location**

Level 9A, Outpatients Centre,  
Royal Victoria Hospital  
Belfast, BT12 6BA