

*The* ROYAL MARSDEN

NHS Foundation Trust

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## Young Adult Psychological Support (18-24 years)

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**Support for young adults who  
have cancer and their families**



**NHS**



This leaflet is for young adults aged 18-24 years who have been diagnosed or received active treatment from The Royal Marsden within the last two years. It describes the service offered to you and your family by the Adult Psychological Support Service.

## **When a young adult has cancer**

Cancer and its treatment can have a big impact on you and your family, including your partner, children, parents, siblings and other important people in your life.

We are here to support you and/or your family members with difficulties related to cancer diagnosis and treatment. These issues vary from individual to individual and family to family, but may include:

- Adjusting to the diagnosis of cancer including anxiety, low mood, and lack of self-confidence
- Finding life challenging and struggling to cope after diagnosis
- Fears associated with hospitals or treatment
- Making decisions related to treatment
- Coping with treatment side effects
- Impacts on relationships
- Sexual consequences of cancer and its treatment
- Concerns about your family or children
- Worries and anxiety about cancer recurrence
- Questions about the meaning and purpose of life following diagnosis.

These are some of the topics people discuss with us, but there may be other issues you wish to talk about.

We are able to meet with you on your own and/or with your family. When we work with families our aim is to help them support and listen to each other, and to focus on the strengths and positive aspects of family life, whilst acknowledging how overwhelming some difficulties can be.

If you feel very low or distressed and think you may harm yourself, please contact:

- your GP
- emergency services on 999
- attend Accident and Emergency
- Samaritans on Freephone 116 123.

## What is the service?

The service includes experienced **Counsellors** and **Psychotherapists, Art Therapists, Sex Therapists** and **Psychologists** who have all been trained in psychological therapy (often called ‘talking therapy’). They will help you express and explore your thoughts and feelings in a safe, confidential (private) environment, and help you develop coping strategies.

The service also includes **Mental Health Nurses** and a **Liaison Psychiatrist**. They are available to support patients who need specialist help, including taking medication to help with mood, or accessing mental health support from outside this hospital.

## What happens next

When you are referred, we will call you on the telephone to discuss what support you are looking for and who might be the best person to meet with you. If you believe members of your family may also require support (including children) please let us know so we can put support in place. If you are an inpatient when referred, we will come and meet you face to face for an initial discussion.

## **Is seeing a psychologist, counsellor or psychiatrist confidential?**

We keep what you say to us private (confidential); however sometimes it can improve your care if we share some information with others involved in caring for you. Sometimes it can be helpful for us to write to your GP or the person who referred you when we finish working with you. We will ask your permission before sharing information with others. The exception to keeping what you say to us private is if we think that you or someone else is at risk of harm, in which case we will need to share this information.

## **How can I access the service?**

The service is available to people aged 18 to 24 years, who are receiving or have had active treatment at The Royal Marsden within the last two years. We can meet you in our outpatient rooms, on the ward or in daycare.

Patients and families can contact the Adult Psychological Support Service directly. To do this, please contact us on the telephone numbers below between 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, you can leave a message on the answering machine.

Alternatively, ask any member of your healthcare team at The Royal Marsden to refer you to the service.

## Contact details

### **Sutton:**

Compton House  
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust  
Downs Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5PT

**Tel:** 020 8661 3006

### **Chelsea:**

Floor 1, Markus Unit  
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust  
Fulham Road, London, SW3 6JJ

**Tel:** 020 7808 2777

**Email:** Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk

## References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre  
Freephone: 0800 783 7176  
Email: [patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk)

No conflicts of interest were declared in the production of this booklet.

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

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[royalmarsden.org](http://royalmarsden.org)

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