

Accessing Support: LGBTQ+

Many people find that going through cancer diagnosis, treatment or remission can be physically and mentally challenging, and navigating this experience as part of the LGBTQ+ community can add another layer of complexity to this. Your healthcare team should provide you with care that best suits your needs. However, at times, it might be useful to get some perspectives of other LGBTQ+ people who have been affected by cancer, in order to understand the specific challenges they might have faced, and any suggestions they might have for navigating cancer as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, some people find it helpful to reach out for support to help them through this challenging period.



Below is a list of organisations who may be able to offer you some support, as well as some resources that you may find helpful to read/listen to. The range and quality of services/support available from such organisations may vary. This list has been gathered as signposting only, and The Royal Marsden cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information provided by an organisation listed or the quality of their services.

If you have any questions or would like further advice/guidance about where to seek specialist help in your local area, you can speak with a member of your Royal Marsden treatment team or the Adult Psychological Support Service.

AKT (Albert Kennedy Trust)

A charity supporting LGBTQ+ people aged 16-25 who are at risk of, or are experiencing, homelessness or hostile living environments. You can self-refer and get support, both for finding and securing safe housing, as well as getting urgent homelessness support. They also offer a wide range of signposting and resources.

Website link: <https://www.akt.org.uk/>

elop: LGBTQ+ Mental Health and Wellbeing

elop aims to promote better mental health for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer+ people from across Greater London and Essex borders. elop has a large team of LGBTQ+ counsellors and offers reduced rate, time-limited counselling. Additional support is available within their HeadsOut services, with individual and group support. They also offer other social spaces for LGBTQ+ people to get together with facilitated activities and community events.

Website link: <http://www.elop.org/>

Contact number: **07908 553744**

Families Together London

A London-based support group for parents, families and friends of LGBTQ+ individuals. They hold confidential, friendly and relaxed meetings three times a month: the 4th Saturday of every month between 12:00-15:30 at their Battersea venue; the 2nd Saturday of every month between 11:00-12:30 on Zoom is aimed at parents of transgender children; and the third Wednesday of the month between 6-7pm on Zoom. They also host a variety of events.

Website link: <https://www.familiestogetherlondon.com/>

Galop

An LGBT+ anti-abuse charity who work directly with thousands of LGBTQ+ people every year. They specialise in supporting those who are or have experienced domestic abuse, sexual violence, hate crime, honour-based abuse, forced marriage, so-called conversion therapies, and other forms of interpersonal abuse. Galop have a free helpline at **0800 999 5428**. You can also email them at help@galop.org.uk

Website link: <https://galop.org.uk/>

Imaan (Muslim)

The UK's leading LGBTQ+ Muslim charity which campaigns to promote awareness and acceptance of LGBTQ+ Muslims. They hold a variety of events in addition to running an online forum which allows you to seek help, offer advice, or chat with other LGBTQ+ Muslims. They also provide advice and resources about Islam specific to LGBTQ+ Muslims.

Website link: <https://imaanlondon.wordpress.com/>

LGBT Walnut

An independent support group for any LGBTQ+ person affected by prostate cancer. They meet twice a month: firstly, online on the first Saturday of the month, then, face to face on the third Saturday of the month in New Cross, London, at the METRO's office. You'll need to book your place at the meeting, so it's best to contact them beforehand through the 'Contact Us' section of their website.

Website link: <https://www.lgbt-walnut.org.uk/>

London Friend

A charity supporting the health and mental wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community in and around London. They offer counselling and support around issues such as same-sex relationships, sexual and gender identity, and promoting personal growth and self-confidence. In addition to counselling, London Friend offer 'Antidote' drug and alcohol support, and social and support groups.

Website link: <http://londonfriend.org.uk/>

METRO Charity

An equality, diversity and inclusion services charity offering low-fee one-to-one counselling for LGBTQ+ people over the age of 19 based in London. They provide twelve one-to-one sessions, allowing a safe and non-judgemental space to talk openly. You can email counselling@metrocharity.org.uk or call their mental health team on **020 8305 5009**. You can self-refer into the service or have someone else (like a GP or social worker) make a referral on your behalf.

Website link: <https://metrocharity.org.uk/mental-health/lgbtq-counselling-for-adults>

Mermaids

One of the UK's leading LGBTQ+ charities aimed at empowering trans, non-binary and gender-diverse children and young people (up to the age of 20) and parents of transgender children. They offer a helpline available at **0808 801 0400**, as well as an online webchat, both of which are open 9am-9pm Monday to Friday and staffed by trained operators. You can also text **85258** for free 24/7 crisis support from trained volunteers with support from experienced clinical supervisors.

Website link: <https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>

MindOut

A mental health service run by and for LGBTQ+ people who have experience of mental health issues. They offer both an Online Support Live Chat (open on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons) as well as a telephone befriending service. Additionally, there is a low-cost counselling service based in Brighton and East Sussex which provides both face-to-face and video call/telephone sessions. Their peer support groups are available to people aged 18+. For those aged 50+, they are running a wellbeing project aimed at older LGBTQ+ people.

Website link: <https://mindout.org.uk/>

Mosaic LGBT+ Young Persons' Trust

A London-based organisation which aims to support, educate and inspire young LGBTQ+ persons and those around them. They provide a host of accessible activities and services, including: a Young Adults Group (18 - 25 years old), mentoring, online counselling, and winter and summer retreats.

Website link: <https://www.mosaictrust.org.uk/>

National LGBT Cancer Network

A network which educates the LGBTQ+ community about increased cancer risks and the importance of screening and early detection, as well as advocating for LGBTQ+ people in mainstream cancer organisations, the media, and research. The network is running free 2-hour Zoom cancer peer-support groups three times a week for LGBTQ+ individuals who have or have had cancer. For more information, you can email info@cancer-network.org.

Website link: <https://cancer-network.org/programs/support-groups-for-survivors/>

OneBodyOneFaith (Christian)

A charity which provides a network for LGBTQ+ Christians, allies, and those who want to learn more. They are committed to making changes within the church to allow LGBTQ+ Christians to thrive in a diverse community. They run a community called 'Rhythm', which meets weekly at 6:30pm on Zoom for 30 minutes of prayer; additionally, they meet twice yearly for retreat days. They also provide a variety of resources specifically for LGBTQ+ Christians.

Website link: <https://www.onebodyonefaith.org.uk/>

Outcome

A client-led service run by and for LGBTQ+ people, provided by the Islington branch of Mind – a mental health charity. They provide a sanctuary for LGBTQ+ people to socialise freely, receive therapies to improve their mental health, and attend a variety of activities and groups. Please email outcome@islingtonmind.org.uk to find out more about their in-person and online group, or call them at **020 7272 5038** (Tuesdays only).

Website link: <https://www.islingtonmind.org.uk/our-services/outcome/>

OUTpatients (formerly 'Live Through This')

An LGBTQ+ cancer charity offering resources and advocacy, amplifying LGBTQ+ voices in cancer care. OUTpatients provide a safe space for anyone who identifies as part of the queer spectrum and has had an experience with any kind of cancer – at any stage. OUTpatients offer an online patient support group, advocacy services, and free resources for those affected by cancer.

Website link: <https://outpatients.org.uk/>

Out with Prostate Cancer

A group offering mutual support, shared experience and practical information to those who face the challenges and reality of living with prostate cancer. They are primarily directed towards gay and bisexual men, trans women, and non-binary people. They aim to provide advice and support to help members feel less alone and gain perspective. The group meets on the first Saturday of every month between 2pm – 4pm, both in-person in the centre of Manchester and simultaneously on Zoom.

Website link: <https://outwithprostatecancer.org.uk/>

Pink Therapy

The UK's largest independent therapy organisation working with gender and sexually diverse clients. Through their Directory of Pink Therapists, they can help LGBTQ+ clients seeking therapy find qualified and experienced therapists who are right for them. These therapists are in private practice and adopt a sexuality and gender affirmative stance in their work.

Website link: <https://pinktherapy.com/>

Spectra

A London-based charity offering free and confidential counselling for people who identify as trans, non-binary or are questioning their gender identity. They support people of all sexualities, gender identities, cultural influence, and ethnicities who want to make positive changes to their lives, with a focus on sexual health and emotional wellbeing. In addition to counselling for trans individuals, they also provide general sexual health counselling and trans art therapy groups.

Website link: spectra-london.org.uk

Stonewall Housing

A national charity supporting LGBTQ+ people of all ages in the UK who are experiencing homelessness or are living in an unsafe environment. They provide free and confidential services including Housing Advice helping, which you can access at **0800 6404 404** every weekday 10am – 1pm, mental health advocacy, support for people fleeing domestic abuse, a Supported Accommodation Project, a Live Chat, and specialist support for those over 50.

Website link: <https://stonewallhousing.org/>

Switchboard

A telephone service which provides a safe space for anyone to discuss anything, including sexuality, gender identity, sexual health, and emotional wellbeing. Their service is non-judgemental and confidential, provided by LGBTQ+ volunteers. You can call them at **0800 0119 100**, 365 days a year, 10am – 10pm. You can also email them at hello@switchboard.lgbt

Website link: <https://switchboard.lgbt/>

UCATS

UCATS: The UK Cancer and Transition Service. They offer an integration of gender and cancer care to encourage consideration of concerns around gender in cancer treatment. Their process includes the following: virtual clinic appointments to review gender and cancer care, Multi-Disciplinary Team discussion, review of evidence related to treatment, letters of recommendation to cancer care team, signposting to important services such as therapy and counselling, and an optional follow-up. You can self-refer or have a healthcare professional refer on your behalf.

Website link: <https://www.wearetransplus.co.uk/uk-cancer-and-transition-service/>

Additional support services

Cancer Care Map

An online database of cancer support services. You can search by postcode or by particular themes e.g. cancer type.

Website link: <https://www.cancercaremap.org/>

Maggie's Cancer Centres

Cancer care centres with multiple locations, including The Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton and Charing Cross Hospital, West London. Workshops, groups, information and one-to-one counselling available.

Website link: <https://www.maggies.org/>

Phone number: **0300 123 1801**

NHS Talking Therapies

NHS website to help you find your local psychological talking therapies service based on your GP address. Your local NHS talking therapies service can be helpful if you would like psychological support for cancer when you are no longer regularly coming in for appointments at The Royal Marsden, as well as for concerns unrelated to cancer or that predated your cancer and have become worse due to it.

Website link: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-nhs-talking-therapies-service/find-your-gp>

If you need any specialist and personalised advice about your cancer treatment, symptoms or side effects, please contact The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline. This hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on **020 8915 6899**.

The Royal Marsden's Adult Psychological Support Service offers short-term, cancer-specific psychological and psychiatric support. You can either self-refer or ask somebody in your Royal Marsden healthcare team to refer you. For more information, visit [Adult Psychological Support Service | The Royal Marsden](#). Alternatively, contact us directly on **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea), **020 8661 3006** (Sutton), or email Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk.



If you have ideas for other signposting or information sheets, or if you would like to be involved in working with APSS to improve the service we offer, please scan the QR code to see more about our patient and public involvement, or email Psychological.SupportAdmin@rmh.nhs.uk or telephone **020 7808 2777** (Chelsea) / **020 8661 3006** (Sutton) with your ideas.

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