

# Psychology in Dermatology Service

**This leaflet explains about the Psychology in Dermatology Service. If you have any questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## What is the Psychology in Dermatology Service?

The Psychology Service within dermatology gives emotional support for people with any skin condition under the care of the following clinics: general dermatology, psoriasis, eczema, hidradenitis suppurativa, immunobullous, vulval, hair and nail, urticaria, photodermatology and vitiligo. Psychology is a big part of dermatological care at Guy's and St Thomas' as we recognise that skin problems can have an impact on your wellbeing. We often meet with people who are having difficulties related to their skin condition, which have an impact on their emotional wellbeing and quality of life.

## How can the Psychology in Dermatology Service help you?

The Psychology Service can work closely with you to find ways to enhance your wellbeing. This work may include supporting you to manage:

- the impact of the condition on your day-to-day life (including work, hobbies and relationships, including sexual relationships)
- coping with treatment (for instance medication, side effects, needles)
- adjusting to or managing the uncertainty of the future with your condition
- your management of the condition over the short and long term
- the effect the condition may have on your feelings about yourself and your appearance
- decision-making and treatment planning
- lifestyle factors (for instance, weight, alcohol use, physical activity)
- anxiety, worries or low mood related to the condition.

## How does the service work?

You might briefly meet with a psychologist when you come to your dermatology clinic. This might be with another member of the team or separately. It is also possible to meet with the psychologist on a separate hospital visit or by phone or Skype. These appointments normally last for about one hour. Your appointment may be a one-off session, or a series of appointments may be arranged, depending on your needs. Sometimes we are able to recommend other services that may be more suited to meeting your needs.

If you would like to meet with a psychologist, please tell a member of the dermatology team that you would like to be referred.

We understand that it can be difficult to meet with a psychologist to discuss the types of difficulties outlined above. We would be happy to talk with you about your concerns and how we can support you to come to appointments.

## Other psychology service options

If psychology in relation to your skin condition is not needed, but you do want to talk about other stresses affecting your wellbeing, or you have a preference for seeing a therapist in your local area, there are options.

You can ask your GP to refer you to your local talking therapy service, or self-refer by going to the NHS Choices website and searching 'psychological therapies'. You can enter your GP surgery's postcode and will be given details of your local talking therapy service.

## Useful sources of information

### Skin Support

The Skin Support website was developed by the British Association of Dermatologists (BAD). It gives lots of information on various skin conditions and treatments, self-help materials and access to support services.

**w:** [www.skincare.org.uk/](http://www.skincare.org.uk/)

### Guy's and St Thomas' website

This page of our website has other leaflets about the different skin conditions and treatment you may receive at the hospital. We also have a leaflet on other organisations and self-help materials that support people with skin conditions.

**w:** [www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/our-services/dermatology/patients/patient-leaflets.aspx](http://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/our-services/dermatology/patients/patient-leaflets.aspx)

### Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline. **t:** 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

### Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

**t:** 020 7188 8801 (PALS)      **e:** [pals@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@gstt.nhs.uk)

**t:** 020 7188 3514 (complaints)      **e:** [complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk)

### Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch. **t:** 020 7188 8815      **e:** [languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day. **t:** 111

### NHS website

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health. **w:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

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