

usually attend appointments every 1-3 weeks and we will try to fit appointments around your treatment and commitments.

### How long are the appointments?

Appointments usually last 50-60mins and take place at St Benedict's Hospice.

There is free car parking on site at St Benedict's Hospice. We also have a patient transport service so transport can be arranged for patients to attend outpatient appointments.

### Confidentiality and Privacy

Information shared within appointments is confidential, if we were concerned you were a risk to yourself or someone else we would need to break confidentiality and inform other professionals to get you further help and support.

There may also be information we feel it would be helpful to share with the wider medical team supporting you. We will always include you in these discussions and agree what you are happy to share. We will always try to maintain your privacy, dignity, and treat you with respect.

### For general enquiries you can contact:

Psychological Support Services  
St Benedict's Hospice  
St Benedict's Way  
Ryhope  
Sunderland  
SR2 0NY

Main Reception: 0191 512 8400

Website: [www.stbenedicts.co.uk](http://www.stbenedicts.co.uk)

*Supported by St Benedicts Hospice charity  
Registered charity number 1019410*

This information was correct at the time of publication. While the Trust makes every reasonable effort to keep its information leaflets up to date, very recent changes may not yet be reflected in the information and you should discuss this with the clinical staff at the time of your appointment.

Production date: January 2020  
Review date: Dec 2023

Ref: STSFT/1120



**St. Benedict's Hospice**  
& Centre for Specialist  
Palliative Care

## Psychological Support Services at St Benedict's Hospice



**South Tyneside and Sunderland**  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Who are we?

The team consists of clinical psychologists and an art psychotherapist, who have experience in working with patients with a palliative condition. We offer a range of different psychological therapies that can help you to develop different ways of dealing with difficult thoughts and feelings, and improve your wellbeing. We see patients, relatives and carers who are involved with a Specialist Palliative Care Service at St Benedict's Hospice. Referrals can be made by any staff member who works within the Specialist Palliative Care Service.

## Why have I been referred?

A palliative care condition causes both physical and psychological difficulties, an illness affects the whole person, as well as the relatives and carers supporting that person. Sometimes seeking support from Psychological Support Services can help people to adjust and cope differently.

## What difficulties can we help with?

- Coping with adjustment, change and loss
- Difficulty in re-engaging with life with a palliative diagnosis
- Difficulty living with uncertainty about the future and life expectancy
- Feelings of anxiety, depression and anger associated with your palliative condition
- Worries about the future and fear of death
- Loss of confidence or changes to your self esteem
- Coping with persistent pain, fatigue and other side effects
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulties in relationships with family, friends or healthcare professionals
- Adjustment to loss and change in sexual functioning and intimacy
- Adjustment to loss and change in life roles and aspirations
- Post traumatic symptoms associated with treatment

This list is not exhaustive, these are simply an example of kinds of difficulties we may help people with.

## Will it be helpful?

Research has shown that seeking psychological support can help reduce or alleviate psychological distress and improve the ways in which people may cope with difficulties.

Often people find it helpful to have a private and confidential space that is separate from your family and medical team. It can be useful to express feelings, help you make sense of your difficulties or share things you may find it difficult to talk to those you are close to.

## What to expect at your first appointment?

The first appointment gives us an opportunity to find out more about the kinds of difficulties you may be experiencing and how a psychological therapy may be able to help. During this appointment we may ask you what problems you are experiencing, when they first started, what kinds of things you may have done to try to help yourself so far, and times when it is better or worse. It can be daunting coming to talk to someone you have not met before, and we understand this.

We will continue to work with an individual or couple until the difficulties are starting to improve, you feel more confident in managing the difficulties or your goals have been achieved. People