



Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust: Information for Families

Psychosocial and Family Services: The orthopaedic psychology service

This leaflet explains the orthopaedic psychology service and how the service can help young people and their families. The orthopaedic psychology service is part of psychosocial and family services.

Who are clinical psychologists?

Psychologists are often part of the multi-disciplinary team who work at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). The orthopaedic team is made up of a variety of professionals who work together to manage your child's care (surgeons, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, play specialists, social worker). A psychologist works with the orthopaedic team to think about ways of helping families cope with their child's condition and treatment. The psychologist also often meets with children or young people and their family members.

When can we help?

We can help at any time during your child's treatment by the orthopaedic team at GOSH; that can be before, during and after an admission to GOSH. For example, we sometimes meet with families before an admission when:

- they have difficult decisions to make about orthopaedic treatment options.
- they are having difficulties coping with multiple or long term treatments, such as spinal surgery or leg lengthening.
- a child has worries about having an operation or having an anaesthetic.

We can meet during hospital stays, for example, to help cope during different medical procedures or with managing pain.

We can also provide support when your child is out of hospital, as sometimes living with an orthopaedic condition, coping with treatments and admissions to hospital can affect behaviour. For example, if a child is feeling down or worried about things, has problems with getting on with others or is losing interest in activities. We can also meet with families if they are finding it hard to cope with the impact of the orthopaedic condition/treatment.

**If you would like to discuss any aspect of this service before your appointment, please contact the psychologist mentioned in your letter through Psychosocial and Family Services:
020 7829 8896 (direct dial)**



How will we be able to help?

We will listen to your concerns and try to understand your situation and find a helpful way forward. We focus on the strengths and resources you have to help you to find new solutions to difficulties and make changes for the better.

We can work with your child to develop strategies to manage the difficulty, or meet with you to find ways to support your family in coping with the difficulty.

When you are in hospital, other members of the ward team may also be able to help your child with some worries or anxieties, such as having blood tests and anaesthetics. Your child may meet with the play specialist or their nurse may be able to help.

What will happen when we meet?

At our first meeting, you will be given the chance to talk about the issue or problem that has brought you to see a psychologist, and how it is affecting your life. We will also ask your child about their interests, hobbies, friends, home and school life. We may ask them to play games or do some drawings. This meeting will help you and the psychologist decide together whether the kind of help we can offer will be useful to you.

Please let us know if you need an interpreter and we can arrange this free service for you.

Compiled by the Department of Psychological Medicine
in collaboration with the Child and Family Information Group.

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Are our discussions with the psychologist confidential?

- We will always tell your child's doctors and nurses that we have met with you. However, we will ask for your permission to pass on any information that is relevant to your child's medical care. Any detailed notes we make when we meet will be kept separately from your child's medical notes.
- When there is a concern that a child may be at risk of harm we then have a responsibility to share information to ensure that child's safety. Where at all possible, this will be discussed with you first.
- To improve the way we work, psychologists have a supervisor and they discuss their work with their supervisor. These conversations are confidential.

What else do you need to know?

The team of healthcare professionals caring for your child keep records about the health of your child, any treatment and care received, and your family background. For information on accessing your child's healthcare records and how the records are used, please speak to the psychologist or see the leaflet *Information held about your child*.