



People usually come to appointments every 1 to 3 weeks. We will try to fit appointments around your treatment and life.

### How long are the appointments?

Appointments usually last 50 minutes. They will take place at St Benedict's Hospice. There is free car parking on site here too.

We also have a patient transport service. We can arrange transport for you to come to appointments if you can't make it in yourself.

### Confidentiality and Privacy

What you tell us in your appointments is confidential. This means we will keep it private and safe. If we were worried you were a risk to yourself or someone else we would need to break confidentiality. We would have to tell other professionals to get you more 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.

### Want more information?

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  
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We try hard to keep our information leaflets up to date. This information was correct when we wrote it. It may not include very new changes. Staff will tell you if anything has changed and check that you understand at your appointment. You should ask if you are unsure about anything.

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**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?

Our team is made up of clinical psychologists and an art psychotherapist. We have experience working with patients with a palliative condition. Palliative care is where we help people who have a life-limiting illness feel more comfortable.

We offer many different psychological therapies. They can help you to find ways to deal with hard thoughts and feelings. They should also help to improve your wellbeing.

We see patients, family members and carers who are involved with a Specialist Palliative Care Service at St Benedict's Hospice. Anyone who works in the Specialist Palliative Care Service can refer you to us.

## Why have I been referred?

You have a palliative care condition. This can cause physical and psychological problems. An illness affects the whole person. It also affects family members and carers supporting that person. Sometimes getting support from us can help you to adjust and cope better.

## What problems can we help with?

We can help you with:

- Coping with change and loss
- Struggling to re-engage with life after you get a palliative diagnosis
- Finding it hard to live with uncertainty about the future and how long you will live
- Feeling anxious, depressed or angry because of your condition
- Worrying about the future and fear of death
- Losing your confidence or your self-esteem changing
- Coping with constant pain, tiredness and other side effects
- Problems sleeping
- Difficulties in relationships with family, friends or healthcare staff
- Adjustment to loss
- Change in sexual functions or intimacy
- Adjustment to loss and change in life roles and aspirations
- Post traumatic symptoms because of your treatment

This list is not everything we can help you with. They are just examples of the kinds of problems we can help people with.

## Will it be helpful?

Research shows that getting psychological help can reduce psychological distress. It can also improve the ways people cope with difficulties.

It can be helpful to have a private and confidential space that is separate from your family and medical team. You can:

- express feelings
- make sense of your problems
- share things you may find it difficult to talk about

## What can I expect at my first appointment?

The first appointment gives us the chance to find out more about the kinds of problems you may be having. This then helps us to work out how therapy may help you. At this appointment we may ask you:

- what problems you are having
- when your problems started
- what things you have tried to do to help so far
- times when it gets better and worse

It can be scary coming to talk to someone you have not met before. We understand this.

We will continue to work with you until things are starting to improve. We want you to feel more confident managing your problems.