

## Contacting the Palliative Care Team

0118 322 7826 or email  
[palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)  
Monday to Friday 8am-4pm

## Other useful contacts

**Macmillan Cancer Information Centre**  
Berkshire Cancer Centre  
North Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital  
Monday to Thursday 9am-4pm  
Fridays 9am-2pm  
0118 322 8700  
[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/wards-and-services/macmillan-cancer-information-centre.htm](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/wards-and-services/macmillan-cancer-information-centre.htm)

## Macmillan Cancer Support Line

0808 808 00 00  
[www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk)

## Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

0118 322 8338  
E-mail: [PALS@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)  
[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/patient-advice-and-liaison-service-pals.htm](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/get-in-touch/patient-advice-and-liaison-service-pals.htm)

To find out more about our Trust visit  
[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

## Your feedback

If you would like to comment or leave feedback about our service, you can call us on: **0118 322 7826** or email us at:  
[palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

## Hospital Palliative Care Survey

We appreciate your feedback; please scan the QR code to fill in an online survey – takes approximately 5 minutes to complete. (Please ask if you would like a paper copy.)



Or write to:

**Hospital Palliative Care Team**  
**Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust**  
**Reading RG1 5AN**

**If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 0118 322 7826 or email [palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:palliative.care@royalberkshire.nhs.uk)**

Hospital Palliative Care Team, December 2023  
Next review due: December 2025



**NHS**

**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Hospital Palliative Care Counselling Service

Information for patients, relatives and carers

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**You or your family may have asked for some help, or the doctor or nurse providing your care may have suggested that you access counselling during your admission. This leaflet aims to help you understand what to expect from this service.**

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### **What is counselling?**

Counselling is the opportunity to talk about anything you wish, in a safe, non-judgemental and confidential environment. We will work with you through the difficulty and help you to develop new ways of coping.

When people are seriously ill, it is normal to feel upset, worried and even angry. Hospital staff are there to support you and will try to ensure that you have the information you need about your condition and any treatments that you may be offered.

They want to know if you are feeling upset or anxious about any aspect of your illness or treatment. Sometimes, people need more support and you may be offered counselling.

### **Palliative Care Team Counsellor**

The counsellor is part of the Palliative Care Team and may help if you experience difficulties, such as anxiety, depression, loss of confidence or problems in relationships. They can support communication and it may be an opportunity for you and/or your family to talk through concerns; to gain an understanding of your emotional reactions; and to develop strategies to help you cope.

### **Who can access counselling?**

Patients can be referred for counselling if they are an inpatient at the Royal Berkshire Hospital and have been diagnosed with cancer or another life-threatening illness.

The medical team may suggest a referral or you can ask for a referral to be made.

It is also possible for the partner or close relative of the patient to access counselling; as we recognise that it can be overwhelming for the family as well as the patient. The referral for a partner or relative would usually be made by a member of the Palliative Care Team, **with your permission**. You can also ask a member of staff to make a referral to the Palliative Care Team for support.

### **When will I have counselling?**

The counsellor will usually see you on the ward or in a private room near the ward, if one is available and it is appropriate to do so. How often you meet will depend on the difficulties that need to be addressed. The meetings will not continue after discharge but the counsellor can help you think about any further support you might require after you leave hospital.

### **Will what we discuss be treated confidentially?**

Counsellors follow the same rules of confidentiality as all hospital staff and respect everyone's right to confidentiality and privacy. We are part of the clinical team and routinely communicate with other health professionals involved in your care. However, details of your sessions will remain confidential (except in rare circumstances when there is a risk of harm to yourself or another).