



A lifetime of specialist care

## **Royal Brompton Hospital**

### **The adult asthma psychology service – a patient's guide**

#### **What is the adult asthma psychology service?**

The adult asthma psychology service helps patients understand and cope with the emotional effects of having severe asthma. It also helps people who have upper airway conditions, for example, problems with their vocal cords that make breathing difficult, and other problems with breathlessness.

#### **Who runs the adult asthma psychology service?**

The service is run by a clinical psychologist – a health professional who is specially trained to understand the emotional difficulties people may face and suggest ways to help them cope.

#### **What sort of issues can the service help me with?**

It can help you with all sorts of issues. For example:

- low mood, worry or depression about your health and symptoms
- difficulties coping with your health, symptoms and treatments
- anxiety or worry about past or future hospital admissions or procedures
- self-esteem (confidence) or body image problems resulting from long-term treatments
- keeping control of, and independence over daily activities
- worries about your family or relationships.

#### **How do I access the adult asthma psychology service?**

Your medical or therapies team may suggest you would benefit from seeing a clinical psychologist. Or, you may see a clinical psychologist as part of a systematic assessment of refractory asthma (SARA) assessment at Royal Brompton. Talk to a member of your medical or therapies team to find out more.

#### **What happens at my first appointment with the service?**

You meet the clinical psychologist to talk about your worries or concerns, and discuss the things you would like to address (tackle) or to change.

The clinical psychologist then talks to you about whether or not you will benefit from further appointments. Further sessions are arranged if it is agreed that you will benefit. Patients typically have between six and 10 sessions. Each session lasts for around one hour. You can ask to be seen on your own at sessions, or with family/friends.

You may also be given some self-help guides written specially for Royal Brompton patients and/or be invited to a group workshop run by the clinical psychologist.

Please note: At the end of the first appointment, the clinical psychologist may refer you to a different service within the hospital or close to where you live.

### **What therapies does your clinical psychologist service use?**

The service uses talking therapies (also known as talking treatments). You talk through your thoughts and feelings. The clinical psychologist helps you understand them better and works with you on practical ways to cope with difficult thoughts and emotions.

### **Where are the sessions held?**

If you are an outpatient, sessions will be in an outpatient clinic. If you are an inpatient, the clinical psychologist will see you in the ward or in a quiet room in the hospital.

### **Confidentiality**

If you are an inpatient, the clinical psychologist will write a short summary about your progress in your confidential medical record.

If you are an outpatient, the clinical psychologist will normally send a written summary to your medical team and your GP after your first session and when you have finished your sessions.

The clinical psychologist will discuss this with you, so you feel safe and confident about any information shared with other medical professionals involved in your care.