At the Wessex adult CF service we believe it is important to address all aspects of your healthcare and treatment. Therefore, as well as medical treatment, the team works closely with clinical psychologists to help support you, and your family and friends.

You will probably meet a clinical psychologist at your annual review or at clinic appointments. The psychologists are available between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

What does a clinical psychologist do?
They work with people who are having difficulties in their life and would like help in coping with them. Clinical psychologists have around ten years training before qualifying. They use a wide range of psychological methods to help people assess and tackle emotional problems, but do not use medication.

When to see a clinical psychologist
Living with a chronic illness like CF, as well as other life stresses, can be challenging. How you cope with one aspect of your life can affect how you cope with having CF and its treatment, and vice versa.

Many people find talking over their problems with someone is helpful. This might be a friend or relative, or might be one of the CF team who you feel you can talk to. This is often enough, but there may be times when you have a complex issue to deal with and need more help than they can offer, or have something you would like to discuss in private. A clinical psychologist can often help at these times.

Seeing a clinical psychologist does not mean there is anything wrong with a person psychologically. It simply means they are trying to improve their ways of coping with problems and want to learn new skills.

Some examples of problems a clinical psychologist may be able to help with include:

- Feeling depressed, angry or worried about illness or treatment
- Sleep difficulties
- Anxiety, including fears about aspects of treatment (such as needles, for example)
- Self-esteem or body image issues
- Difficult decisions about treatment, such as having a transplant
- Issues around fertility and pregnancy
- Problems in following treatment recommendations
- Moving from children’s to adult services
- Problems resulting from CF impacting on family or other relationships
- Pain management
- Grief and loss
**Appointments**
If you choose to be referred to a clinical psychologist you will be offered an initial appointment. This will involve an assessment of the difficulties you are experiencing and what you would like to get out of any potential further sessions. You can choose whether you would like to attend alone or whether to invite family or friends. Sometimes it is useful to invite other people as they help to generate ideas about how to move on and can support you in making changes. After this, an agreement is made about whether further meetings would be useful and, if so, what they might involve.

**Arranging an appointment**
You can ask to meet with a psychologist at any time. You can either ask a team member to arrange a meeting or leave a message yourself. Alternatively, a team member may suggest that meeting with a psychologist might be useful.

If someone in the team feels it would be helpful for you to see the clinical psychologist, but you decide you do not want to, then that is your right. This decision will not affect your medical care or a re-referral in the future. Often people will be very unsure about seeing a psychologist at first, but it may be helpful to have one appointment to see if it is useful or not. You do not have to come back if you do not want to.

**Confidentiality**
Information discussed in the sessions is confidential and would only be shared with other members of the team if you agree to this, or if essential to your treatment or safety. Information will not be given to others such as family members, unless you give your permission.

**Contact details**
You can contact a psychologist by telephoning the Southampton adult CF unit on **023 8120 6801** or by telephoning the Poole adult CF unit on **01202 263038**.