

Medical oncology department

## **Psychosexual medicine and therapy service for gynaecological patients**

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **[the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net)**

For information and advice visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford. Opening times can vary, please check before making a special journey.

Contact The Christie Hotline for urgent  
support and specialist advice  
**The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658**  
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



## About the psychosexual medicine and therapy service

The gynaecological psychosexual service provides support for patients and their partners affected by gynaecological cancers whose sexual function, sexual relationships, intimacy or body image, have been altered by their diagnosis and treatment. It is common for patients to need some support; this may be talking therapy, physical treatments or both.

All cancer treatments have the potential to affect a person's desire, interest, arousal and sexual satisfaction as well as intimate relationships and body image. Changes may be caused by surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormone treatment and many types of medications.

### Problems that we can help with:

- loss of desire (interest or libido)
- lack of intimacy or fear of intimacy
- loss of arousal or ability to orgasm
- pain associated with sexual activity
- vaginal and vulval changes due to treatment or menopause (dryness, pain, skin changes)
- significant menopausal symptoms
- genital pain
- body image changes
- concerns about fertility
- relationship concerns related to the above
- any other concerns that affect a person's sexual wellbeing.

### Who the service is for?

Patients who have had a gynaecological cancer diagnosis and their partner. Patients can attend on their own or with their partner - it is their choice.

Partners may also feel they need support adjusting to the consequences of the patient's treatment and they can be seen individually.

## When can I get support?

Concerns about sexual wellbeing may become prominent at any point in your journey, for some seeking help early is appropriate, for some it is more relevant later in their recovery. Access to the service is available when you need it.

## How can we help?

Some consequences of treatments impact more on your physical sexual function and may benefit from treatments and/or medications. We will discuss options with you and can arrange prescriptions or interventions where appropriate. We will work with your consultant and clinical team if we need to discuss medications however intimate information about the therapeutic work is not shared.

We understand that this may be difficult topic to talk about however it is often very helpful for patients to address their worries, concerns, fears, relationship and communication difficulties with the therapist. Therapy gives you a safe confidential space to explore your feelings and concerns. The therapist will work with you towards agreed goals, using a variety of skills and tools to support you. Face to face and virtual appointments will be offered.

## How do I get referred?

Patients can be referred by their consultant, clinical nurse specialist or any member of the clinical team.

You may also self-refer by contacting:

The CAREGO clinical coordinator

**0161 956 1520 / 07977 968924**

or email [the-christie.carego@nhs.net](mailto:the-christie.carego@nhs.net)