



# Complementary health and well-being

A guide for patients and their carers



# Introduction to the complementary health and well-being service

## **What are complementary therapies?**

The complementary health and well-being service (CH&W) is offered alongside cancer treatment, and is free to patients and their carers. Some therapies aim to facilitate relaxation and an overall sense of well-being. Others may provide relief from symptoms such as: anxiety, pain, sleeping difficulties, nausea/vomiting, breathing difficulties, hot flushes, reduced energy levels, constipation, burning/numbness/tingling in hands and/or feet related to chemotherapy. As well as offering therapies for the above reasons, the team also use them to support health and well-being initiatives such as smoking cessation.

Complementary therapy practitioners use an holistic approach. A 'toolkit' of skills is employed to support emotional, psychological and physical well-being. Complementary therapists provide support through the cancer experience and beyond.

Information about all the available services can be found in clinical departments, from the cancer information centre and on The Christie website.

## **Can complementary therapies help in my cancer treatment?**

Cancer Research UK (2018) has reported that patients, who use various forms of complementary therapies to reduce stress and anxiety, could have less side effects and even better outcomes from the treatment. Managing stress can also improve general well-being and feelings of relaxation. This is reported by many patients who have found the treatments extremely helpful.

## **Are complementary therapies safe?**

Complementary therapies are often promoted as 'safe', 'gentle' or even 'natural', but everyone accessing the service will need to be assessed to ensure their chosen therapy is appropriate for them. The therapists at The Christie are all qualified to deliver their designated therapies to cancer patients. If you have any queries or concerns, it is important that you talk through the benefits or possible drawbacks of a specific therapy and your condition with the therapist. You may also like to discuss any proposed therapies with your Christie doctor or nurse.

It is important to state that no claims are made for any of the therapies covered in this document being curative or offered as a replacement for the conventional assessment and treatment of cancer.

## **Where can I access complementary therapies?**

The CH&W service is funded by The Christie charity and offers a range of therapies free of charge. The following pages will provide you with further information about the different therapies and how and where you can access them within The Christie.

## Complementary therapy treatments at The Christie

The CH&W service is available at the main Christie site as well as Oldham, Salford and Wigan. All the therapies offered are evaluated and recognised by the NICE guidelines.

### A-Z of therapies available at The Christie

Acupuncture	
<i>What is it?</i>	Acupuncture is a form of therapy in which fine needles are placed through the skin into specific points on the body. These needles are left in place for approximately 20-40 minutes. All needles are single use only.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Acupuncture can be used alongside standard care for patients to treat symptoms such as pain, hot flushes, sleep difficulties, nerve problems, fatigue and nausea.
<i>When/where is it available?</i>	Patients may attend the evening clinic in the rehabilitation unit, the complementary therapy supportive care clinic on a Friday morning or by appointment on other days of the week.
<i>Treatment</i>	Weekly clinic appointment for up to 10 weeks. Blood counts may need to be checked to ensure they are within safe levels.
<i>Referral process</i>	Acupuncture is only available following formal medical referral by your Christie consultant.

Aromatherapy/essential oils (clinical use)	
<i>What is it?</i>	Use of essential oils as part of a therapy (e.g. massage) to help provide physiological / psychological symptom relief.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Patients primarily, however inhalation devices (aromasticks) may be used as part of a therapy for carers, for example for sleep disturbance.
<i>When/where is it available?</i>	Treatment sessions are available across the Trust by appointment.
<i>Referral process</i>	Essential oils for clinical use (e.g. wound care) are only available after a referral by a senior member of clinical staff with consultant approval. Other referrals can be received from all clinical staff and by self-referral.

Hypnotherapy/CALM/Pre-op Service	
<i>What is it?</i>	Uses the person's own ability to achieve a focused state, building resilience and managing anxiety states.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	To assist patients with treatment related anxiety, panic and phobias and to help patients access their own coping skills. Supportive interventions including hypnotherapy and stress management techniques can be provided prior to a procedure, investigation or surgery by appointment.

<i>When/where is it available?</i>	Provided either by appointment within our hypnotherapy outpatient service or by referral from clinical staff to support during/prior to medical procedures/ treatment.
<i>Treatment</i>	Patients may need to attend an additional hospital visit if a pre-arranged session is required. Therapist can attend patients in areas where the procedure/treatment is being delivered with permission from the clinical staff.
<i>Referral process</i>	Patients can self-refer. Priority will be given to patients experiencing panic states and phobias related to treatment/ procedures.

#### Health advice (e.g. smoking, alcohol)

<i>What is it?</i>	<p>Uses the person's own ability to achieve a focused state, building resilience and managing anxiety states.</p> <p>The provision of tailored and treatment specific health advice focusing on smoking cessation support, nicotine replacement guidance and alcohol advice. Stopping smoking and reducing alcohol has been shown to have many benefits during cancer treatment such as reducing the risk of infections, nausea and anxiety, improving wound healing and promoting recovery and increasing the effectiveness of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.</p>
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Patients, carers and staff.

<i>When/where is it available?</i>	The health advisors are contactable by bleep or through the complementary health & well-being main office.
<i>Treatment</i>	There are many different techniques that the therapists can use including arranging a nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) prescription, ear acupuncture, aromasticks, helping with coping strategies and general advice. You can have one-to-one sessions or sessions with family and friends to support your lifestyle change.
<i>Referral process</i>	Referrals can be received from all clinical staff and by self-referral.

Massage/chair massage	
<i>What is it?</i>	Massage involves applying gentle pressure to the soft tissue, which may or may not involve a massage oil. Chair massage uses an ergonomically designed chair to delivered massage, in a comfortable and supportive position.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Available for both patients and carers.
<i>When/where is it available?</i>	Available for all patients in clinic, ward settings and twice weekly drop-in sessions run in the rehabilitation unit.
<i>Treatment</i>	Massage treatment can either be with oil or through clothes, according to patients' or carers' preference.
<i>Referral process</i>	Referrals can be received from all clinical staff and by self-referral.

The HEARTS Process <sup>®</sup>	
<i>What is it?</i>	The HEARTS Process <sup>®</sup> is a very gentle approach combining touch, empathy, aroma and textures to aid comfort and relaxation.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Patients and carers.
<i>Treatment</i>	The HEARTS Process <sup>®</sup> is offered through clothing, it may also include the use of voice and aromas and can offer relaxation even when massage may not be appropriate.
<i>Referral Process</i>	Referrals can be made by all clinical staff. Patients and carers can also self-refer.

Adapted reflexology	
<i>What is it?</i>	Gentle pressure to acupressure points in the hands and feet. The purpose of the intervention is to focus on relaxation, anxiety reduction and help with discomfort.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Patients and carers.
<i>Treatment</i>	Grapeseed oil is applied to exposed hands and/or feet and gentle pressure applied to specific areas of the hands and/or feet.
<i>Referral Process</i>	Referrals can be made by all clinical staff. Patients and carers can also self-refer.

Relaxation and visualisation techniques	
<i>What is it?</i>	Visual imaging and/or gentle physical movements combined with focussed and comfortable breathing. Relaxation CDs are available on request post session.
<i>Who is it for?</i>	Patients and carers.
<i>Treatment</i>	Relaxation classes are provided by trained therapists or can be delivered in 1:1 sessions with patients.
<i>Referral process</i>	All clinical staff can refer. Patients and carers can also self-refer.

## How and where to access the service

The service is currently available Monday to Friday 9:30am–4:30pm.

Please see schedule below for the areas that are covered. If a patient is identified as requiring additional support on a different day to the days covered, then a referral can be made by a clinical member of staff. A same day response cannot be guaranteed. We do have a triage system in place and if there is a patient in another clinical area who is deemed to be a priority then the designated therapist will attend to that patient first.

### **Oncology critical care unit (OCCU)**

Hours of cover: Monday 1:30pm–4:30pm

### **Clinical trials unit**

Hours of cover: Monday 1:30pm–4:30pm  
 Tuesday 9:30am–12:30pm  
 Wednesday 1:00pm–4:00pm

## **Oak Road treatment centre**

Hours of cover: Monday to Wednesday 9:30am–4:30pm  
Thursday 9:30am–3:30pm  
Friday 9:30am–3:00pm

## **Drop-in clinic, rehabilitation unit (department 3)**

Hours of cover: Tuesday and Thursday 4:00pm–6:00pm

Comments: This is a drop-in clinic which is available for both outpatients and their carers. There is no need to book, just turn up. Only one treatment is allowed per week and only one carer to accompany each patient.

## **Supportive care outpatient clinic (department 42)**

Hours of cover: Friday 9:00am–3:30pm

## **Supportive/palliative care services (end of life support for patients and their carers)**

Hours of cover: Monday to Friday 9:30am–4:30pm  
for inpatients  
Thursday and Friday am by appointment  
for outpatients

Location: Inpatients – all wards  
Outpatients – drop-in (see above) or  
supportive care clinic

Note: Patients will be assessed and adaptations made to ensure safety and comfort at all times. Carers may receive a treatment beside their loved ones on the ward.

## **General wards**

Hours of cover: Monday to Friday 9:30am–4:30pm

Location: Monday – oncology assessment unit  
and OCCU  
Tuesday – ward 11  
Wednesday – ward 12  
Thursday – ward 10 and ward 1  
Friday – ward 4

### **Palatine ward & treatment centre**

Hours of cover: Monday to Friday 9:30am–4:30pm

### **Radiotherapy department**

Hours of cover: Monday to Friday 9:30am–4:30pm

### **Oldham radiotherapy unit**

Hours of cover: Wednesday and Friday 10:00am–4:00pm

### **Salford radiotherapy unit**

Hours of cover: Monday 9:30am–4:30pm

Please note that times/ treatment areas may be subject to change following hospital and service developments. It is advised to check with the information centre to ensure the information in the booklet is the most up to date.

## **Choosing a complementary therapist outside The Christie**

If you decide to use a therapist outside The Christie, always use a qualified and insured therapist who has also had specialist cancer care training. It is important to talk it over with your doctor or healthcare professional and ask for their advice, especially if you are going to have a therapy which involves taking a 'remedy', 'pill' or 'supplement'. Check the cost of treatment beforehand to make sure you are being fairly charged. Choose the complementary therapy that feels comfortable and safe for you.

It is also important to feel confident in the professionalism and expertise of the therapist you consult to feel safe and supported; what suits one person may not suit another. It can take time to establish a relationship and for any possible benefits from the treatment to become apparent. Don't be afraid to stop if you don't feel comfortable with a therapist or say 'no' to further treatment.

### **What to expect**

A complementary therapist may discuss wider aspects of your life and health than some health practitioners. They may also spend the first session talking to you about your health, history, and temperament, gaining a broad understanding of you as an individual.

Note: Do not be misled by promises of cures. No reputable therapist or a therapy can claim to be a cure for cancer.

### **What if you feel you are not getting the right treatment?**

No therapist or health professional can guarantee a successful and helpful treatment. If you have reasonable grounds for being dissatisfied with some aspects of your treatment, talk or write to the therapist in the first instance, or the practice manager, if they work through a charity or support centre.

### **Further support**

For further support and advice you might also like to contact your local Macmillan nurse or general practitioner. It may also be useful to contact a local hospice or cancer care centre about the services they offer. Below is a list of complementary therapy providers in Manchester and Stockport:

## **Bury Cancer Support Centre**

St James Church Centre,  
St James Avenue, Bury  
Tel: **07899 990260**

## **Beechwood Cancer Care Centre**

Chelford Grove, Stockport  
Tel: **0161 476 0384**

## **Maggie's Manchester**

The Robert Parfett Building  
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust,  
15 Kinnaird Rd M20 4QL

## **Maggie's Oldham**

The Sir Norman Stoller Building,  
The Royal Oldham Hospital,  
Rochdale Road, Oldham OL1 2JH

## **Neil Cliffe Cancer Care Centre**

Wythenshawe Hospital  
Tel: **0161 291 2912**

## **Oldham Cancer Support Centre**

Failsworth Primary Care Centre  
Ashton Road West, Failsworth, M35 0AD  
Tel: **0161 906 2940**

## **St Ann's Hospice**

Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire  
Tel: **0161 437 8136**

## Trafford Macmillan Care Centre

Moorside Road, Davyhulme, Manchester

Tel: **0161 746 2080**

Tel: **0161 641 4848**

For information about services nationwide please contact Macmillan Cancer Support Freephone **0808 808 00 00** [www.macmillan.org.uk](http://www.macmillan.org.uk) or contact the cancer information centres (phone numbers on back cover).

Please note the complementary therapy team at The Christie cannot take responsibility for treatments provided outside of the hospital.

## Contact information

If you would like any further information about our services and other sources of support and advice, please do not hesitate to contact us or visit The Christie website [www.christie.nhs.uk](http://www.christie.nhs.uk)

## Complementary health and well-being team

Telephone: **0161 446 8236**

## Smoking cessation and alcohol advice

Telephone: **0161 918 7175**

## The Christie app

Download the official Christie app to help you find your way around the main hospital site easily. The app also includes key information on The Christie's history, charity funded projects and useful details on food and drink options. Travel information is also included. Available for iPhones and most Android models.

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.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence.

If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

## Christie website

For more information about The Christie and our services, please visit **www.christie.nhs.uk** or visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham or Salford.

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

### Visit the Cancer Information Centre

The Christie at Withington **0161 446 8100**

The Christie at Oldham **0161 918 7745**

The Christie at Salford **0161 918 7804**

Open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm.

Opening times can vary, please ring to check  
before making a special journey.

### The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

Wilmslow Road  
Manchester M20 4BX

**0161 446 3000**

**[www.christie.nhs.uk](http://www.christie.nhs.uk)**

The Christie Patient Information Service  
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