

How long will I have to wait for an appointment?

We aim to contact you within 2 weeks of receiving a referral and to offer you an initial appointment within 4 weeks of your referral. These times might vary depending on how busy we are.

What about confidentiality?

Information you share in your psychology sessions may be discussed with the wider respiratory team to plan co-ordinated care, and communicated with other professionals such as your GP. We will only share information with professionals involved in your care and we will talk to you first if possible.

Sometimes, people wish to share very sensitive and personal information with the psychologist which they do not want discussed more widely, and you can request for this to be kept confidential.

Does this mean my doctor thinks my problems are 'all in my mind'?

No - certainly not! Seeing a psychologist does not mean your Respiratory team thinks your problems are in your mind. You are simply taking a step in trying to reduce the impact of your physical health condition on your life.

Your medical care will not be affected in any way if you decide that you do not want to pursue the sort of help described in this leaflet.

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Contact details:

Respiratory Health Psychology
Integrated COPD service at Luton & Dunstable and
Bedford Hospitals
Tel: 01582 497236 (Luton & Dunstable Hospital)
Tel: 01234 730331 (Bedford Hospital)

Further information:

My Lungs My Life

Website with information about breathing difficulties
Web: mylungsmylife.org

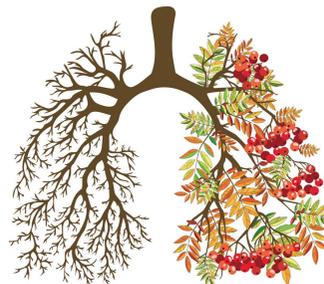
British Lung Foundation

National charity supporting people with breathing difficulties
Helpline: 03000 030 555 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)
Web: blf.org.uk

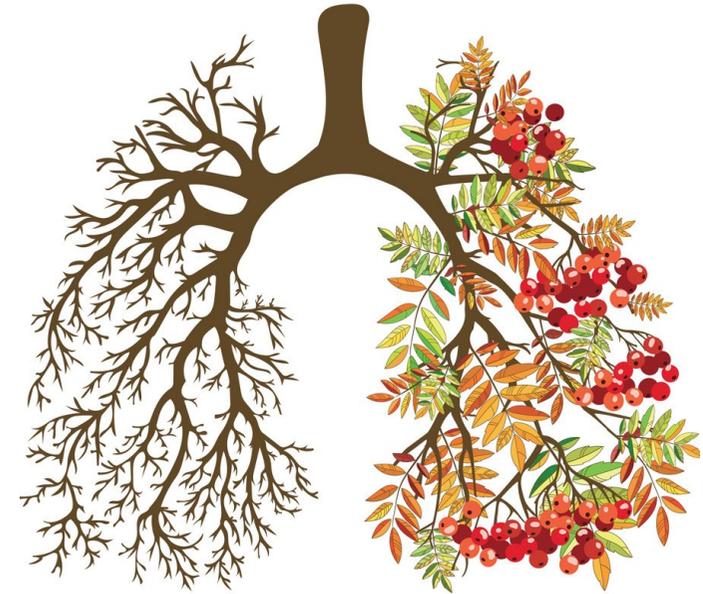
Association of Physiotherapists in Respiratory Care

Web: acprc.org.uk/publications/patient-information-leaflets

COPD for Dummies (book) by Kevin Felner & Meg Schneider. Wiley Publishing, 2008



Psychological Support for Respiratory Difficulties



Bedfordshire

We are here to help and support people to manage the symptoms of their respiratory illness and gain a better quality of life.



LUTON &
DUNSTABLE
UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL

Bedford Hospital **NHS**
NHS Trust
Bedfordshire
mental health and wellbeing service
provided by ELFT **NHS**

This leaflet explains the psychological support available to you within the Respiratory Medicine Services.



Who we are

We are set up as part of the integrated COPD service and the Respiratory Medicine clinics of the Luton & Dunstable and Bedford Hospitals.

We have a counselling psychologist who offers individual and group interventions as well as support to other professionals.

Our mission:

The Bedfordshire Respiratory Health Psychology Team aims to deliver responsive, timely and effective assessment and psychological interventions to people with a diagnosis of respiratory difficulties in Bedfordshire as well as effective consultation to services and professionals involved in the care of respiratory conditions.

How can I benefit from meeting with a psychologist?

Each person with respiratory problems will have a different set of challenges, although many of the issues may be similar.

You may develop negative feelings such as stress, worry, anxiety and/or low mood as well as unhelpful thoughts. This in turn may lead to poor health management and an exacerbation of respiratory conditions.

During therapeutic sessions we can talk about your own experience in a non-judgemental space. We can explore how your physical health impacts upon your life and then look at how you would like your life to improve alongside your respiratory condition.

Psychological therapy can help you identify what changes are achievable and meaningful to you. Therapy may then help you to develop new skills and/or expand your existing skills to help you work towards your desired changes.

Psychological therapy sessions can help with:

- difficulty in coming to terms with and managing a respiratory condition
- learning to adapt to limitations caused by your condition
- helping you to cope better with emotional triggers of asthma, such as stress, low mood and anxiety
- helping you to cope with health anxiety regarding your condition, including managing panic attacks
- modifying unhealthy lifestyle behaviours that impact on your breathing.

How to access this service

All members of the respiratory services, such as nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and medical consultants as well as other professionals are welcome to make a referral.

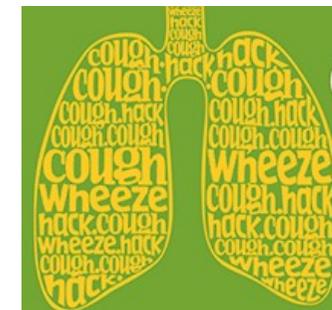
However, you can also contact the service directly if you wish to discuss anything in confidence or before an appointment is made (see contact details overleaf).

What happens after being referred?

After you have been referred we will contact you to arrange an initial face-to-face appointment at either Luton & Dunstable or Bedford Hospital.

You may wish to come to the first meeting on your own, or you are welcome to bring friends or relatives with you. We will then discuss whether this service or another service may be helpful to you and you can think about whether you would like to give this a go. Some people benefit from just a few sessions, others may prefer a longer period of working together.

Interpreters can be arranged if needed.



We will help you listen to your lungs!