

## **Information about changes to the way we support your mental wellbeing**

Dear

You might have heard about planned changes to specialist mental health support for cancer patients provided by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT). We understand that changes may cause you some concern or worry about access to services for your mental health and wellbeing in the future, particularly at this difficult time. This letter is to provide you with clear information about our plans to improve and widen the range of mental health support available, from staff with specialist skills. It also outlines how you can ask any questions you might have and provide any views about these plans and your future care.

LPT, local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and Leicester's Hospitals (UHL) want to reassure you about our shared commitment to ensure that as a patient diagnosed with cancer, you will continue to have timely access to high quality, skilled NHS care for your emotional wellbeing when you need it and close to home.

The NHS, nationally and locally, wants to ensure that all patients receive the right level of support for their needs, at the earliest opportunity and in the right settings. In line with these expectations, which are outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, we are introducing a new 24-hour acute mental health service to support all patients across UHL with urgent mental health needs. Originally planned to launch in April 2020, this service was delayed by Covid-19 and is now expected to open by spring 2021. The service will offer a one-hour response for patients presenting at the Emergency Department and a 24-hour response for patients referred from hospital wards. This service will continue to support any patient with cancer who is in hospital and needs this level of support.

Patients who have a long term diagnosis, including cancer, but who are not currently in hospital, will be able to access community-based talking therapies or community mental health services as part of their continuing care.

### **How this affects you:**

LPT clinicians are reviewing patient care plans and if you have not already been involved in discussions about this, you will have the opportunity to discuss your ongoing care with your care team who will consider your future options with you.

For patients of Leicestershire Leicester and Rutland, the CCGs have commissioned the Let's Talk Wellbeing (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies or IAPT) services to support patients with long-term conditions which include cancer. They have trained NHS therapists who are able to support people adjust to difficult diagnoses and to live with complex physical health conditions.

As part of your care plan review, this might mean you are referred to IAPT - or you can refer yourself. If it is agreed that you are currently well enough to be discharged, you can still choose to refer yourself either now or in the future.

However, if it is decided in partnership with you, that you have more complex mental health needs then you can be referred to community support including local community mental health team or other specialised teams as appropriate.

In the meanwhile, if you need urgent mental health support you can contact our dedicated 24-hour all-age NHS urgent mental health support phone line on 0116 295 3060 . You can ring at any time to speak to a member of the mental health team who will ensure you are offered the support that is right for you.

### **What happens next?**

We understand that you might have questions. We know, for example, that many patients value the patient support group currently in place for patients with cancer. As a group of NHS organisations, we are in discussions with the patient support group to understand what help and advice they need to ensure they can continue to offer group support for those who benefit.

While Covid-19 prevents most face-to-face meetings, we will be setting up an online question and answer session for all affected patients, where CCG, UHL and LPT representatives will explain more about the changes. They will listen to any feedback you want to share and answer any questions. This will be part of a number of engagement events which we will be conducting around a range of improvements we are looking to make to mental health support across the system. We will be writing again within the next few weeks to invite you to an online event.

Yours sincerely

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