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Diabetes and life

Getting the right balance

***Information for people with diabetes
and their support network***

**Diabetes Centre
JJR Macleod Centre for Diabetes,
Endocrinology and Metabolism
Foresterhill**

Introduction

Living with a lifelong condition like diabetes can be difficult. At times, people can feel overwhelmed by the demands of trying to look after themselves and the demands of life in general. To make things more complicated, people with diabetes are often trying to change the way they've lived their lives for a long time. That's not easy for anyone.

The Psychology Service provides relatively short-term assistance for people who are struggling with one or more aspects of diabetes. The Service is problem-focused, which means that we are interested in how things are for you right now, and in helping you find ways to make your life better.

What kinds of problems do you help with?

In general, we try to help people who are struggling to look after their diabetes. So, we're interested in helping people deal with whatever is getting in the way of this. The sorts of things that can get in the way of people looking after themselves might be to do with diabetes, or they might be to do with other important aspects of life such as partners, family, friends, work and so on.

Typically, people who are struggling might notice they are:

- Trying hard to not think about diabetes or not think about changing the way they live their life.
- Running blood glucose high to reduce worries about having a hypoglycaemic episode.
- Feeling generally low and sad.
- Often being worried about the future and imagining things turning out for the worst.
- Finding making decisions difficult.
- Feeling generally more irritated.
- Struggling to change longstanding habits such as eating and routines.
- Eating more or less than they used to.
- Not being so keen to see friends and go out.
- Regularly struggling to follow the recommended treatments of health professionals (such as carbohydrate counting, blood glucose monitoring, attending screening appointments).
- Experiencing frequent hypos either because they are running blood glucose levels very tight or because they have lost the signs that blood glucose is dropping.
- Feeling that they can't cope, or angry and frustrated about having diabetes.
- Finding using a CGM or insulin pump overwhelming for various reasons, including making sense of all the data.

What should I do if I would like to be seen?

Just call Shona Robertson on 01224 558075 or Pamela Souter on 01224 558121 to arrange a time for your first appointment.

You can also arrange an appointment with someone from the team by emailing:

gram.psychologydiabetes@nhs.scot

How long will the first appointment last?

Usually about 50 minutes. At the end of this time, we'll agree if it's a good idea for you to come back or not. It might not be best for you, for example, because another service in Grampian better suits your needs.

Sometimes, we can offer further appointments remotely using the online platform Near Me so you don't need to travel to a clinic for your appointment. We can discuss this at your first appointment.

Then what?

If, after the first appointment, we decide to keep meeting, we'll agree some goals for us to work toward and we'll spend our time together trying to work on these aspects of your life. Different people make different goals, and some have included to:

- Feel less stressed and worried about the future
- Find ways to better control blood glucose levels
- Cope better with diabetes, pain, or life generally
- Stop comfort eating
- Not feel so unhappy and sad
- Feel more in control
- Improve confidence in coping with changes around diabetes self-management and condition progression
- Be able to deal with distressing thoughts
- Improve decision-making about things that impact on diabetes (such as activity levels, taking medication as appropriate)
- Balance better diabetes and life.



Altogether, we'll meet for up to eight more appointments. You can of course, decide that this service isn't for you at any time.

Further information

We've written this leaflet to try to answer some of the questions that people often have before coming along. However, as you can see there's not much space on a small leaflet so we might not have answered your specific questions or concerns. If we haven't, then please contact us and we'll do our best to give you the information that you need. To find out more or make an appointment, please contact:

Shona Robertson

Secretary

 **01224 558075** 

Pamela Souter

Secretary

 **01224 558121** 


You can also email the team at

gram.psychologydiabetes@nhs.scot

Other resources

Breathing Space

Telephone Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

 **0800 83 85 87** (freephone number)

The helpline is open 24 hours a day at weekends (from Friday 6pm to Monday 6am). All calls are confidential.

 **www.breathingspace.scot/living-life**

Headspace

Online meditation and mindfulness courses to help alleviate emotional distress.

 [**www.headspace.com**](http://www.headspace.com)

Moodjuice

Support for people struggling with a range of emotional distress.

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


Be Mindful

An online mind-body approach that helps people to manage their thoughts and feelings.

 [**www.bemindful.co.uk**](http://www.bemindful.co.uk)

Silver Cloud

Online support for psychological distress related to diabetes.

 [**www.silvercloudhealth.com/uk/news/
addressing-the-psychological-impact-of-
diabetes**](http://www.silvercloudhealth.com/uk/news/addressing-the-psychological-impact-of-diabetes)

This leaflet is also available in large print.

Other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please call Quality Development on 01224 554149 for a copy. Ask for leaflet 1130.

Feedback from the public helped us to develop this leaflet. If you have any comments on how we can improve it, please call 01224 554149 to let us know.

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