

How confidential is it?

Confidentiality is very important throughout the health service. In your appointment the psychologist will discuss with you what information will and will not be shared with staff on SCBU. Sometimes some brief information may be added to your baby's file but this will not be routine and you will be told if this is going to happen. So that we can remember the important details that you share, some notes may be kept but a formal file will not be opened for you or your child. The notes are only a memory aide for us and do not need to be shared with any other professionals.

Occasionally, formal letters might be written, but again the information that is shared with other professionals will be agreed with you in advance.

On very rare occasions we cannot keep confidentiality. This can occur when we are concerned that someone is at risk of significant harm if we do not act on the information we have received.

Who can I contact for more information?

- Dr Tracy McGlynn
Consultant Clinical Psychologist
- Dr Louise Harrold
Principal Clinical Psychologist
- Dr Sophie Little
Clinical Psychologist



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Paediatric Health Psychology



Support for families in SCBU



Why would we want to speak to a Paediatric Clinical Psychologist?

Most parents don't plan on arriving in SCBU with their baby. It can be a difficult time for parents, with feelings of sadness, worry, anger, loss, and upsetting memories about the birth. At the same time as trying to deal with these difficult (but normal) emotions you are trying to learn to be a parent to your baby and to cope with hospital life.

The aim of the Paediatric Health Psychology Service is to help parents cope with their feelings and experiences and help them build a positive relationship with their new baby. The service is offered alongside the support you already get from medical and nursing staff &/or family.

We have found that parents who: have experienced a traumatic labour; have had difficulties with conception; been through the stress of IVF; are coping with an uncertain future for their baby or a known medical diagnosis; or have had previous losses and/or experiences of being in SCBU with a previous baby can find our service particularly helpful.

What is a Paediatric Clinical Psychologist?

Psychology is the study of people's behaviour, thoughts and feelings.

The focus is on working with families where there is a health issue. The aim is to support you with any emotional difficulties that you may be having as a result of your baby's birth. For example, a parent may feel very scared and this might affect how they feel or behave when they are with their baby. We aim to support you to enjoy your developing relationship with your baby as much as possible.

Who is the Paediatric Clinical Psychologist on SCBU?

Dr Tracy McGlynn, Clinical Psychologist offers a service to parents on SCBU. There are sometimes Clinical Psychologists in their final year of training who also offer this support. She visits the ward most Wednesday afternoons. The Paediatric Health Psychology Service is based in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in the Phoenix Centre. For some families it is helpful that the psychologist is separate from SCBU.

What do I do if I want to speak to a psychologist?

You are welcome to telephone the Phoenix Centre and request a SCBU appointment with Tracy McGlynn or ask any of the medical team to do this on your behalf. Contact details can be found on the back of the leaflet.

We aim to answer any questions about whether our service can help with any emotional difficulties you or your family are experiencing at present.

What will people think if I choose to see a psychologist?

We would encourage all parents to meet with a Paediatric Clinical Psychologist. You may feel a little nervous about doing so, this is natural. You are likely to have met lots of new people since being on SCBU but choosing to talk through your experience with someone who is there to listen in a supportive way can be very helpful.

Choosing to meet with the psychologist is a positive way of trying to deal with emotions that are often experienced when on SCBU. This can, in turn, be important for the development of your relationship with your baby. It is hoped that meeting with the psychologist on SCBU will be considered as routine as seeing the doctor.

Can you tell me more about the first appointment?

In the first appointment you will meet with a psychologist in a private room for an appointment lasting about one hour. This time can of course be flexible if you need to tend to your baby, we can keep this time shorter.

You will be asked about what led to your baby's admission to SCBU and the impact this has had on you, practically and emotionally. We can also talk about anything else that you think is relevant to your current experience of SCBU. For some people that means talking about problems and for some it means talking about the day-to-day happenings on the ward. Much of what is talked about will be up to you, and if there's something you don't want to talk about that's ok too.

Paediatric clinical psychology appointments are not just for those parents finding it difficult to cope, or for those who appear upset or distressed. It is for everyone who has a baby in SCBU. The aim is to promote positive emotional wellbeing for parents and babies.