

section 2.1.1: the role of the multidisciplinary team

7. Clinical psychology

Clinical psychologists can provide tailored, structured and comprehensive psychological assessment and interventions that aim to reduce psychological distress and to promote psychological wellbeing. The focus of their care is the understanding of the cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects of responses to illness¹ across the spectrum of health promotion and maintenance, treatment and rehabilitation, terminal care and bereavement.

Psychological interventions focus on psychological and physical wellbeing, emotional and functional adjustment and facilitating self awareness. These include:

- conducting **comprehensive psychological assessments**, which may include quantitative psychometric tests, cognitive assessment and such measures as the K10 symptom scale for psychological distress² and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 42³ (DASS)
- providing direct **evidence-based therapy interventions** to those patients with complex symptom management including:
 - **cognitive and behavioural therapies**⁴ to assist in managing
 - fear
 - anxiety
 - stress
 - depression
 - self-esteem
 - relaxation⁵
 - hypnotherapy
 - informational and educational therapies, in order to manage the functional requirements of everyday life
 - **non-behavioural psychotherapy**⁶ to assist in managing the following symptoms:
 - nausea
 - pain
 - vomiting
 - persistent cough
 - pain management
 - **stress and anxiety management**
- providing indirect input through **teaching, training, supervision** and consultancy for other professionals to support them in providing basic psychosocial care and circumscribed psychological interventions
- referring to and liaising with community-based services as appropriate.

references

- ¹ Payne S, Haines R (2002) The contribution of psychologists to specialist palliative care. *International Journal of Palliative Nursing* 8:8, 401-4016.
- ² Kessler R, Andrews et al (2002) Measuring outcomes inpatients with depression or anxiety; an essential part of clinical practice. *MJA* 177 (4); 205-207.
- ³ Lovibond S, Lovibond P (1995) Manual for the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (2nd Ed) Sydney Psychology Foundation.
- ⁴ Meyer TJ, Mark M (1995) Effects of psychosocial interventions with adult cancer patients: A meta analysis of randomised experiments. *Health Psychol* 14: 101-108.
- ⁵ Sheard T, Maguire P (1999) The effect of psychological interventions on anxiety and depression in cancer patients: results of two meta analyses. *Brit J Cancer*. 80: 1770-1780.
- ⁶ Devine E, Westlake S. (1995) The effects of psycho-educational care provided to adults with cancer: Meta analysis of 116 studies. *Oncology Nursing Forum* 22, 9:1369-81