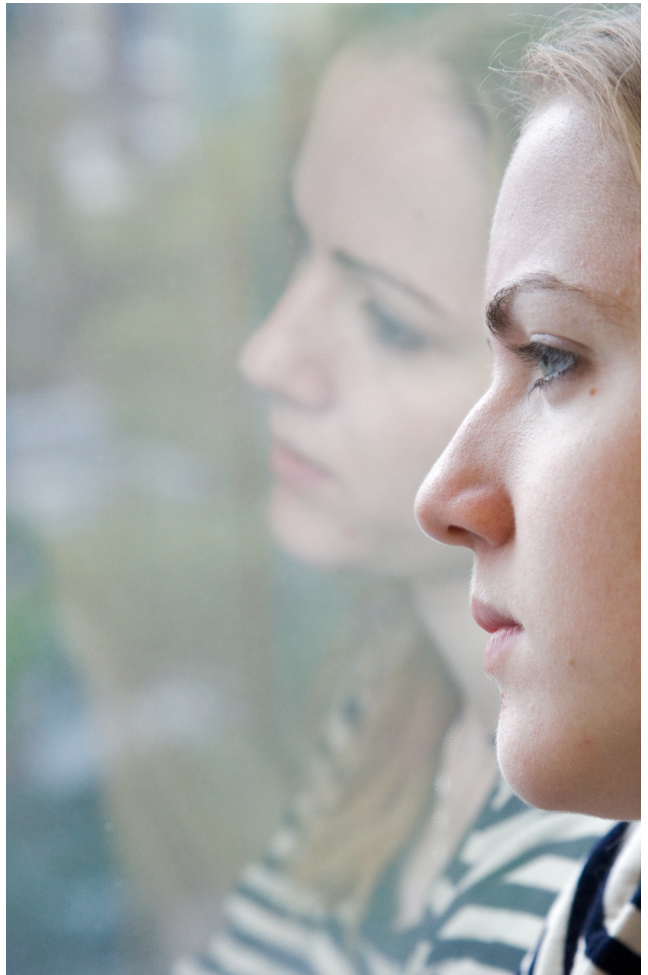


Adolescent Department

Patient Information

December 2010



The Adolescent Department is the part of the Tavistock Centre that helps young people aged 14-21 years. We are a group of doctors, psychologists, nurses, child and adolescent psychotherapists and social workers who have particular experience in helping young people.

What can we help you with?

- Problems talking to/getting on with your parent(s)/family
- Problems in your friendships
- Problems about leaving home
- Problems at school or college, maybe with your school work or exams
- Problems in your relationships at work
- Problems with aggression/bullying (your own or someone else's)
- Worries about your eating
- Feeling lonely, depressed or suicidal
- Problems with cutting or hurting yourself
- Racial abuse
- Sexual/physical abuse
- Worries about your sexual identity (worrying whether you're straight or gay, or whether you feel like you've been born the wrong sex)
- Traumatic experiences, e.g. a road traffic accident, assault or bereavement

What kind of help do we offer?

- Psychotherapy
- Medication

What is psychotherapy?

Some people call psychotherapy 'talking therapy'. This is because therapy involves talking with your therapist about how you are feeling and the things that are worrying you. They will listen closely to you and try to think with you about these worries. Doing this with your therapist should help you to understand a bit more about how you feel about yourself

and how you react to others. Psychotherapy can happen in three different ways – sessions last 50 minutes or longer for group sessions.

- Individual – just you and your therapist
- Group – a group of up to eight young people with two therapists
- Family – you and your family with two therapists

Why medication?

Sometimes if you are very depressed or having very frightening or disturbing thoughts, you may need medication as well as psychotherapy. This is always supervised by your GP or one of the doctors in the department who will discuss any possible side effects with you.

What happens when I come for my first appointment?

Depending on what you want and what we think would be most helpful, you will either meet on your own with one of the therapists or with your family. You will meet with the same therapist for up to four sessions. This is a chance for you to talk about your difficulties or worries. Towards the end, the therapist will discuss with you what kind of treatment might help. If you are offered therapy in the clinic, you will have to wait a few weeks before you can start. This might be with a different therapist. We will do our best to offer you appointments at times that suit you.

What will happen during a psychotherapy session?

A “therapy session” is a set time when you can talk to your therapist about what worries you. At first this can be hard. It’s not like chatting with your friends. You might find that the therapist doesn’t say much and that there are silences. They won’t always answer your questions or talk when you can’t think of what to say. This is not because they are ‘unfriendly’, but because they want you to have some space to work out

what's on your mind. This can take a while to get used to, but your therapist knows how hard it can be. It's helpful to let them know what you feel about the sessions: they are trained to help you cope with any difficult feelings about the therapy.

Are there any side effects?

Thinking together with your therapist about your feelings can be painful. Sometimes you might feel angry or sad after a session and this may even make you feel like stopping the therapy. If these kinds of feelings arise, it's helpful to discuss them with your therapist. It's our experience that facing up to difficulties in yourself and in your life can help you develop and cope better in the future.

If I start therapy how long do I have to come for?

We offer different kinds of therapies in the department. Some are brief (sixteen sessions or less), others are longer (one year or more). You will discuss with your therapist how long it would be helpful for you to attend. Your therapist will discuss with you what treatment you might benefit from so you can decide if you want to go ahead with what they're suggesting.

What happens if you can't help me?

Sometimes the treatments we offer may not be the most helpful for your difficulties. If this is the case, we will help you to find appropriate treatment elsewhere. There are many different kinds of therapies available and we will help you to think about these alternatives.

If you are interested in finding out more about mental health issues for young people and the various help available, the following are good sources of information:

www.mind.org.uk/Information

www.dipex.co.uk/depression

www.depressionalliance.org

Will we communicate with your parents/carers?

When we see young people under 16 we usually offer their parents/carers a separate appointment with a different therapist. Young people whatever their age are seen in confidence. However, if you are at risk, we will let your parents/carers know. If your parents/carers are worried about you, they can arrange to meet a member of staff to discuss their concerns.

Where do I go when I arrive?

If your appointment is between 9am and 5pm, please go directly to the Adolescent Department. To get here, turn left when you come into the main entrance of the building and walk down the corridor until you reach the lift/stairs. Go up to the 3rd floor and the waiting room for the adolescent department is on the right when you come out of the lift or on the left if you took the stairs. Report to the receptionist who will let your therapist know that you have arrived. He or she will then come and get you.

If your appointment is before 9am or after 5pm, please go to reception desk in the main entrance of the building. The receptionist will let your therapist know you have arrived.

How do I confirm, change or cancel an appointment?

Please call the Adolescent Department on 020 8938 2326. You will speak to a secretary who will be able to help you.

Are there facilities for patients with disabilities?

The Tavistock Centre and the Monroe Family Assessment Service are wheelchair accessible. The Tavistock Centre has lifts to all floors. Unfortunately, Gloucester House, The Tavistock Children's Day Unit and the Portman Clinic are not wheelchair accessible. If you are a patient at the Portman

Clinic your clinician can arrange to see you in the Tavistock Centre if necessary.

There are induction loops on the telephones for patients with hearing difficulties in the Tavistock Centre but this is not available in the other buildings. Sign-language interpreters are also available.

There is a disabled toilet in the Tavistock Centre on the ground floor next to the library. If you're in a wheelchair and would like some help with the lifts, do not hesitate to ask at reception. If you have any concerns regarding access, please first discuss it with the reception in your department. If you have further questions, please contact the PALS officer.

Who can I contact if I have any questions or worries about my treatment?

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is here to help with any questions or concerns that you may have about your treatment. Please contact our PALS officer on 020 8938 2523 or email on pals@tavi-port.nhs.uk

The PALS officer can also be contacted if you require this leaflet in another format (e.g. electronic version or large print).

Contact Details

Adolescent Department
Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust
120 Belsize Lane, London NW3 5BA
Telephone: 020 8938 2326
Website: www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

For practical information about the Trust and maps on how to get there, please see the 'Information for Patients' leaflet.