

Centre for disorders of reproductive development and adolescent gynaecology

Psychology service for patients with MRKH

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

This leaflet talks about our psychology service for patients with Mayer Rokitansky Küster Hauser syndrome (MRKH) and how to access it. Please feel free to ask our team any questions you have about the information below.

What is MRKH?

MRKH is a congenital abnormality (an abnormality you were born with) of the female reproductive system that affects about 1 in every 5,000 women.

Women with MRKH:

- do not have a vagina
- do not have a uterus (womb) or have an undeveloped uterus
- have ovaries which produce eggs and female hormones but do not have periods
- cannot get pregnant or carry a baby but they can have children of their own through the process of IVF surrogacy

What is the psychology service for women with MRKH?

It is a service available to anyone attending the gynaecology outpatient clinic who has MRKH. This condition can be very distressing and women attending the psychology service may:

- find it difficult to adjust to their diagnosis
- find it difficult to talk to others about MRKH
- experience feelings of loss
- have mood swings, for example feeling low, tearful, angry and isolated
- have low self-esteem and self-worth
- experience problems with sexual identity and sexual intercourse
- experience difficulties in their relationships
- have concerns about the treatment
- have concerns about infertility, IVF and surrogacy

How can the psychologist help me?

The psychologist will use a range of approaches including cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and systemic therapy to help you to:

- adjust to your diagnosis
- manage negative thoughts and feelings
- deal with losses in relation to fertility and sexuality
- develop effective coping strategies
- identify sources of support

What can I expect from the psychology service?

The psychologist will initially meet with you for about an hour and a half and identify any needs or concerns you have. After this meeting, if you decide that you would like to meet again, she will offer you a number of sessions. You can have between 2 and 12 appointments, each lasting about 50 minutes. It is possible to meet weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

Attending the psychology service involves looking at difficulties in the 'here and now' and thinking about how to cope with these. You do not have to talk about anything that you don't want to.

The psychologist can also work with interpreters.

Is there anyone who is not suitable for the psychology service?

Evidence suggests that psychological support can be beneficial for women with MRKH. However, some women may find it more helpful to speak to partners, family and friends about their current difficulties and may not need a psychologist.

If you live a long way from the hospital and find it difficult to attend regular appointments, the psychologist will discuss this with you and may ask your GP to refer you to psychological services in your local area.

How can I be referred to the psychology service?

Your consultant, doctor or the clinical nurse specialist can refer you to the service when you attend your clinic appointment. Alternatively, you can ask your GP to refer to you by contacting 020 3313 5363 or by email: enquiries.drd@nhs.net

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk