

The social workers and welfare officers employed by the St Christopher's Group provide expert support and advice to St Christopher's and Harris HospisCare patients and their families. They can visit you at home, see you in the Anniversary Centre and the Caritas Centre or meet you somewhere else if you prefer.

It is really important for your care that the information you give us is as full and accurate as possible.

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, CARERS AND FAMILIES

Social work and welfare for the St Christopher's Group



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Social work

Why might I want to see a social worker?

When someone is seriously ill, the whole family is affected. All the normal routines and ways of doing things have to change, and this can be very difficult for everyone.

Our team of social workers have specialist knowledge about the sort of issues that can come up for patients and families in your situation.

They will be able to work with you and your family in a flexible way to accommodate your needs, taking account of what helps you to cope.

I have just been referred to home care/the hospice

This may have come as a shock, and you may feel upset, angry, or frightened about what has happened with your illness and treatment. Some people can become anxious or depressed. Talking through these feelings with someone outside your family and friends can sometimes strengthen your resilience. The social workers may be able to help practically and emotionally.

I don't know where to start

Social workers can advise about what help is available for you locally, make contact with other agencies such as your local council, and arrange for you to meet the specialist welfare team if needed.

What about my family?

The social workers are here to help your family as well. You or your partner may be finding it hard to adjust to the different ways you have to do things when someone is seriously ill, and to the effects the different treatments may be having on your life, intimacy and relationships. Sometimes it can feel that the illness has taken over everything, and you may just want to get your life back.

You may have children or young people in your family who also need to know what is happening, and it may be hard to work out when to talk to them and how to do it. Although you are the experts on your children, social workers have experience of supporting children in this kind of situation, and can help you to work out how to have these conversations, or meet with young people in a local café for example.

I'm the carer, what help is there for me?

Many carers find that taking care of someone is an important and fulfilling time in their lives, but it can also be very draining, and many carers feel that they are near the end of their tether at times. It can be helpful to talk things through, and the social work team may be able to help with practical ideas as well.

Who will be there for my family when I am no longer around?

Our Bereavement Service is available for any of the people you are close to, friends as well as family members and children.

Welfare

I'm worried about money

Many people find that there are extra money worries when someone is seriously ill. The welfare team provide advice and support to you and your family about the benefits you are entitled to. They can also advise you about your employment or help you to sort out any debts that may be troubling you.

What sort of help is there?

The welfare team help with applying for the practical things that will make life easier like help in the home, emergency alarms and disabled badges for the car, and advice about holidays. They can also help with housing issues (like getting support for transfers or dealing with repairs), sorting out pensions and insurance, and give advice on getting legal help for making a will or power of attorney. They also may be able to help if you are worried about the care of your pet.

How do I get in touch?

Speak to your home care or ward nurse, or a member of staff in the Anniversary Centre or the Caritas Centre, and they will arrange for the social worker or welfare officer to contact you.