

## The Berkshire Well-Being Programme

### **The service provided**

Counselling is available to patients whose relationships with their partner and/or family have been affected by cancer.

Counselling helps people to have honest and open conversations about the changes to their lives and how they relate to each other during this major life event.

### **Objectives**

- To help couples, families and individuals make relationships work better.
- To help people to talk to each other
- To develop coping strategies
- To help with sexual problems.

### **Expected outcomes**

- Adults, children and young people have improved resilience and emotional well being
- Adults, children and young people have improved self esteem
- The impact of the cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment on relationships is lessened
- The capacity of family members to manage the cancer diagnosis is improved
- Adults, children and young people feel more confident about talking together about the cancer
- Reduction in depression and anxiety
- Family members are more able to express their feelings
- People work together to get through the difficult times
- People have a place where they can be open and honest about the impact of the cancer and how it affects them, whether they are the patient or a relative/carer

### **The process**

A referral is made to Relate via the Well-Being team. Initial appointments are offered swiftly, within 2/3 weeks of the referral, although it is acknowledged that patients may have other medical appointments and so will attend when they are ready. The first appointment is a rigorous assessment; this gives those attending the opportunity to find out about Relate, to understand what counselling is and to ensure the most appropriate service is offered. The appointments are held with an experienced Relate counsellor.

The counselling may involve the patient, with or without their partner, and/or other key family members.

Patients are offered up to 6 sessions (of one hour duration) funded by Macmillan. These counselling sessions will enable them with the counsellor to work through some of the issues affecting them. The length between appointments will normally be weekly, but this can be flexible.