

# Termination of Pregnancy Counselling Service



**Information for patients**

Department of Psychological Services



In hospital and in the community

*proud to make a difference*

## **Introduction**

This leaflet describes the Counselling Service for women either considering or having had a termination of pregnancy and how to access the service. At the back is a flowchart showing the pathway through the abortion service. In the leaflet we use the terms 'abortion' and 'termination of pregnancy'.

## **Who is the Service for?**

The service is here for women who are pregnant and:

- require help and support with the decision of continuing with the pregnancy or having an abortion, from someone non-judgemental and impartial
- considering or planning an abortion and have existing mental health issues
- considering or planning an abortion and are in need of emotional support around this time, perhaps because of lack of family / friends support
- simply need to talk to someone separate from family and friends who is non-judgemental and impartial.

Women aged 17 and under considering abortion are normally booked for counselling.

The service also provides support for women who have had an abortion and are having difficulties coping emotionally.

## **Who will I see?**

The team is staffed by a Counsellor and a Clinical Psychologist.

We will refer to 'counsellor' in this leaflet, meaning both.

## **Pre-termination counselling - what happens**

In this appointment the counsellor can help you explore your decision by looking at your thoughts and feelings around the pregnancy as well as around an abortion. You can think about the practical aspects of each, and the support you may have.

Normally women see the counsellor for a single session, although you can come again if you need to. The session normally takes about 30-40 minutes, but can be longer or shorter.

After this appointment you may already have a pre-ToP (Termination of Pregnancy) consultation booked, or if not and you decide to go ahead with an abortion, we can book you in for it. It will be on another day. See the flowchart on pages 6-7 for information about what happens at this appointment.

## **Post-termination counselling - what happens**

The first session is an assessment, and you will spend some time talking about how you have been since the termination, and begin to look at understanding how you are feeling and ways of coping.

If you and your counsellor decide that post-termination counselling may help you, you will be offered further appointments. Sometimes people find that they only need a few appointments, and others will need a bit longer. Sessions usually last about 45-50 minutes.

## Will what I tell you be confidential?

- **Pre-termination:** The counsellor will write a brief summary of the session in the treatment booklet, so the confidentiality is kept between the staff who provide your care (support workers, nurses, sisters, doctors). There are some exceptions to confidentiality, mainly if we have concerns about the safety of you or someone else. Confidentiality will be discussed further at the appointment.
- **Post-termination:** The counsellor will make notes of the sessions, which are kept in a secure place. Again, there are some exceptions to confidentiality, mainly if we have concerns about the safety of you or someone else, and this will be discussed further in your first appointment.

## How do I get an appointment to see you?

- For **pre-termination counselling** you need to be referred by your GP, Sexual Health Sheffield, or by staff here in the Termination or Early Pregnancy Service.
- For **post-termination counselling** you can refer yourself by calling the telephone number at the end of this leaflet, or again ask your GP, Sexual Health Sheffield or staff here on the ward.

## Other Resources

The Sexual Health Sheffield website has some useful information on Pregnancy Choices:

- <http://www.sexualhealthsheffield.nhs.uk/services/pregnancy-choices/>

There is also a leaflet you can download with tools to assist you with decision-making about the pregnancy:

- <http://www.sexualhealthsheffield.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Support-with-making-a-decision-about-a-pregnancy.pdf>

## Further information

If you have any further questions about the Termination of Pregnancy (ToP) Counselling Service, please contact:

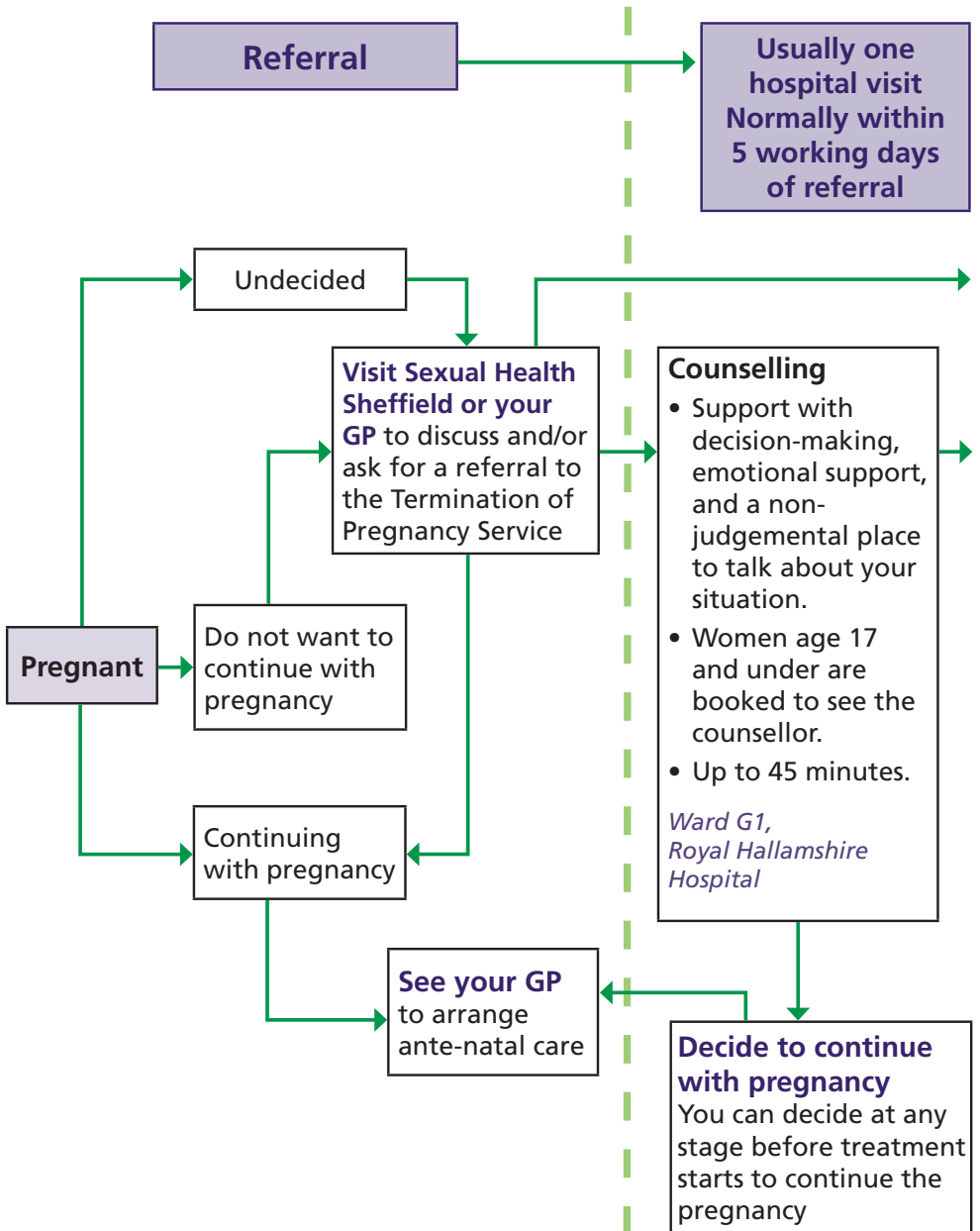
Termination of Pregnancy Service  
Ward G1, Royal Hallamshire Hospital,  
Glossop Road, Sheffield. S10 2JF

- **Tel: 0114 226 8590**

If you have any concerns about the ToP Counselling Service, please contact:

The Service Manager, Department of Psychological Services,  
Room G04, 3rd Floor, Nurses Home, Northern General Hospital,  
Herries Road, Sheffield. S5 7AU

- **Tel: 0114 226 6929**



**Further visit/s**  
Normally within 10 working days of decision to proceed (dependent upon gestation and procedure)

**ToP Consultation**  
with Senior Nurse.

- Ultrasound scan to confirm gestation
- Vaginal swabs to check for infection
- Blood taken if required
- Discussion of ToP treatment options, documentation, booking for abortion treatment.
- Usually 45 - 60 minutes.

*Ward G1,  
Royal Hallamshire  
Hospital*

**Abortion Treatment**

- **Early Medical Abortion**  
1-hour visit, then 1-hour visit 48 hours later, then home to complete treatment.
- **Medical Abortion:**  
1-hour visit, then daycase procedure 48 hours later (more than 12 weeks may need to stay overnight)
- **Surgical Abortion:**  
Daycase procedure
- **Local Anaesthetic Surgical Abortion:**  
Daycase procedure (usually less than 5 hours stay)

The most appropriate abortion treatment for you will be discussed and arranged during the ToP consultation.

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**Post ToP counselling**

Available if required, up to 6 sessions can be offered.

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