

## **Therapeutic services**

Woodlands offers a highly specialised therapeutic environment for the care, supervision, assessment and treatment of young people who have sexualised histories.

Our programmes have an inherent structured framework yet are individually tailored to meet the specific needs of the young person. At Woodlands all young people engage in a therapeutic assessment that includes not only the completion of risk/vulnerability assessments but a psychological screening by our Clinical Psychologist to ascertain their cognitive, emotional and psychological functioning to ensure that treatment is pitched at an appropriate level to ensure optimal engagement and responsiveness. The risk/vulnerability assessments recognise the strengths of the young person and possible risks that they may pose alongside identifying clearly defined goals for therapy, the support that they and their family/carers will need and safety plans that can be agreed with the young people and their support network. The aim of the therapy programmes is to halt the young person's pattern of harmful/risky behaviour by improving emotional wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem, cognitive restructuring, and helping him develop the skills and strategies to control potentially abusive/risky behaviours.

In working with the young person, it is important to understand their behaviour in the context of him as a whole person. It may also require working with his family and significant others.

All young people referred to us will undertake a pre-placement assessment to ascertain their suitability to be offered an initial sixteen-week residential placement. If following such a period, it is felt that the young person is appropriately placed at Woodlands, then a long-term placement will be offered.

Woodlands also has a proven track record in successfully providing remand and post-sentencing placement for boys charged and/or convicted of serious sexual offences. We have also worked with parole cases following part-completion of custodial sentences.

Our external clinical therapeutic consultants afford qualitative and experienced support to our therapists and care staff alike.

## **Therapeutic Interventions**

At Woodlands multidisciplinary working is key and therapy programs are individually tailored to meet the specific needs of the young person. Comprehensive assessments and regular progress reviews ensures this. Woodlands has a multidisciplinary team of accredited therapists and clinical psychologist that provide evidence-based therapies recommended for working in this field as follows:

- **Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy (CBT)** – CBT is a relatively short-term psychotherapy based on the concept that our cognitions impact upon our emotions. In CBT, the young person is enabled to link together their thoughts, feelings and behaviours to ascribe meaning and develop an understanding of consequence. In the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance (2016), CBT is recommended as a first line treatment for children with sexualised

histories and symptoms associated with sexual abuse, depression, PTSD and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

- **Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR)** – EMDR is an integrative approach including elements of other therapies including psychodynamic, cognitive behavioural, interpersonal, experiences that lie at their root, current situations that trigger dysfunctional emotions, beliefs and sensations, and the positive experience needed to enhance future adaptive behaviours and mental health. This is a trauma-focused approach, which aims to eliminate or reduce symptoms specific to trauma, such as PTSD and anxiety (Shapiro 2002).
- **Family and Systemic Psychotherapy** – Family Therapy is provided by a qualified Family and Systemic Psychotherapist using approaches such as structural, narrative, collaborative and psycho-educational. Family work is also undertaken where appropriate to enable the family to gain a better understanding of what has happened in the past and to improve and promote safety within family relationships in future. It may be important to change communications with the family and promote positive family relationships, even if the long-term plans do not include reintegration. Therapeutic support is provided to the young person's family, when appropriate to develop knowledge and skills to enable the family to effectively protect other children and support the young person through their programme. It is now recognised that family intervention is an integral part of the work during a young person's residence and can have a major impact on any positive outcome.

Our therapy team also have further training and skills in the following modalities:

- **Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)**
- **Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT)**
- **CBT-based play therapy (CBPT)**

All therapists within Woodlands are registered with the professional body appropriate for their practicing therapeutic modality as follows:

- Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapists are registered with the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies.
- Family and Systemic Psychotherapist is registered with the Association for Family Therapy and the UK Council for Psychotherapy.
- Therapists practicing Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing are registered with the EMDR Association UK and Ireland.
- Clinical psychologist is registered with the Health Care Professionals Council and the British Psychological Society.