

Seeing a Psychologist in North and North East Lincolnshire

This booklet is designed to provide you with information about the Psychology Service and to answer some common concerns and questions you may have.

Please read the information in this leaflet, and keep it for future reference.



Information for patients and visitors

Who do you see at the Department of Psychological Medicine?

Psychologists in the Department of Psychological Medicine help people to live with their health conditions or the after effects of a health problem or treatment. We see people whose conditions are related to the following medical areas:

- Neurology
- Stroke
- Oncology
- Other Health Conditions such as Gastroenterology, Rheumatology and Diabetes

Why are people referred to a Psychologist?

People can be referred to a psychologist for a number of reasons. Psychologists understand that health affects the mind as well as the body. We work with lots of problems which people may have in health and neurological conditions. The problems people experience can be to do with:

- Adjusting to their diagnosis
- Living with a health condition
- Their thinking skills
- How they are feeling
- How they are acting
- Changes to their personality
- Fears about the future
- Managing or coping with treatment

Issues We Can Help You With:

Feelings and Emotions

Living with a long-term health or neurological condition can affect your emotions. Some people may find it difficult to cope. Feelings of anger, worry, sadness and frustration may become too much to manage. This happens very frequently.

We understand that it can be a very distressing time when an individual and their family and friends are trying to work through what has happened or is happening. Those difficult feelings can make it hard to complete or manage treatment or adjust to life after treatment. People have reported feeling helpless in these situations.

There are many different reasons why someone may be upset, distressed, angry etc. These can include money worries, concern about future health, or wanting to return to work for



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example. A psychologist can help to look at all of the possible reasons for distress and offer support to either the individual themselves, their family, carers, or their wider team.

Personality

Sometimes after a health diagnosis or brain injury, the person can seem to “be a different person”. Sometimes this is because the person is very upset by the diagnosis or what has happened to them. Other times it is due to the damage to the brain.

Many people can feel “changed”. Some people may find different things important after a health diagnosis or head injury. Others may have new interests or hobbies, or stop doing what they did before.

These changes can be seen as positive or negative. They can also lead to difficulties in relationships that may have been based on shared interests, values, hobbies etc. It can be very helpful to talk about the changes with a psychologist.

Thinking skills

These include things that the brain is responsible for such as, attention, how we see things, memory, language, planning, problem solving, movement, vision etc. When there are problems with these skills you can feel like a different person.

Below are some examples of when this might happen:

- Memory problems make it harder to learn new information. This can cause confusion about future plans which means the person forgets what will happen. People can get upset that nobody has told them which means they may be angrier than before
- It can be hard to keep attention on one thing. It is very easy to get distracted. Other people might think this means the person does not care or is not interested in what they are saying or doing
- Seeming to lack motivation. This may be where someone says they will do something but finds it hard to get started on the task
- Saying things they would not have said before that could be seen as rude or offensive
- Not seeming to be aware of their difficulties. For example, not being aware that one side of their body is weaker which can lead to frequent falls if they try to stand or move without help

Actions and Behaviour

Having problems with thinking skills and feelings can lead people to act in unusual ways. This can happen because:

- There is an injury to the brain
- Of treatment side-effects
- Someone is very upset



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This can be strange and upsetting for the person and their family. We can provide support plans to help understand these changes. Usually when we can understand why someone is behaving a certain way, we feel less upset about it. A psychologist can support the person and their family to find helpful solutions.

How can a psychologist help?

Health and neurological problems can affect people's lives in different ways. For example, how they feel about themselves and their bodies.

A person's lifestyle can change and people may have feelings of loss if they have to give up work, hobbies or going out. It can make it hard to find the same enjoyment that they used to have in life.

People can feel anxious, depressed, angry or frustrated. These are very normal feelings. However, it can change relationships with family and friends.

Meeting a psychologist can help by giving people the chance to talk about the problem, the effects it is having on their lives and how to best cope with it. It could also help other people understand why someone may be having difficulties. A psychologist can sometimes work with families to help them to cope and to support the person with the changes. This can be through talking to them or giving them information about the problems.

A psychologist can also help other professionals to work with people differently and to support them in the way they need.

What happens when people see a psychologist?

Once your referral has been received, you will be offered an initial assessment appointment usually within 4 -6 weeks. This first appointment will last about an hour. Questions will be asked about your health or neurological condition and its effects. The psychologist will also ask some background information.

A decision is then made with the psychologist whether further appointments are needed. There may be a waiting period for further appointments, but you will be seen as soon as possible. Self-help information will be provided to you to use during this period if appropriate. Future appointments could be for further assessment or to begin looking at other ways of coping with the difficulties described. This leads to a joint understanding, which is called a formulation.

Patient Responsibilities

Please notify us if you cannot attend your appointment. As you can appreciate this service is very much in demand. We therefore ask patients to try to keep their appointments, to arrive on time and to let us know, with as much notice as possible, if they cannot keep their appointment. Unfortunately due to the demand on the service, patients who do not attend an appointment, without letting us know, will not be offered further appointments (except in exceptional circumstances). Patients who do not want further appointments must let us know, either by telephone or in writing. Thank you for your help.



Information for patients and visitors

How to Contact Us

Department of Psychological Medicine
Cromwell Road Primary Care Centre
Cromwell Road
Grimsby
DN31 2BH

The Department of Psychological Medicine is open:

Monday to Friday: 9.00am - 4.00pm (Except Bank Holidays)

Telephone: (01472) 255660

Outside of these hours there is an answer machine.

Emergencies

In the case of an emergency please contact your general practitioner or attend the Accident and Emergency Department of your local hospital.

Unfortunately due to the level of psychological distress experienced by some patients, this can lead to people being concerned about their safety or their ability to take care of themselves. In this case the following contact numbers may be helpful:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Grimsby Crisis Team | 01472 252360 |
| Scunthorpe Crisis Team | 01724 382000 (out of hours: 382015) |
| Scunthorpe Crisis Team over 65s | 01724 270363 (9am to 5pm) |
| Samaritans Scunthorpe | 01724 860000 |

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on any health related matters.

If you have a comment, concern, complaint or compliment about the care or service you have received from the Trust you can contact the PALS team as follows:

Telephone: 03033 306518

Email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

There are also offices at both the Diana Princess of Wales Hospital (near the main entrance) and Scunthorpe General Hospital (on the C Floor, near the outpatient department), should you wish to visit.

Please note: PALS should not be contacted for clinical advice relating to the content of this leaflet. The service should be contacted directly in the first instance.



Information for patients and visitors

Confidentiality and How We Use Data

Personal information on NHS patients is collected and recorded within paper and electronic formats primarily to support high quality care that is safe and effective. To do this, information is also used to support quality improvement activities, investigate any concerns you may raise as well as to support and understand NHS performance. All NHS staff have a legal duty to keep information about you confidential.

Information will only ever be shared with people who have a genuine need for it. Other circumstances where information may be shared include administrative teams to plan future care needed, commissioners of Trust services, other NHS or social care providers and in some cases voluntary sector providers.

Zero Tolerance - Violent, Threatening and Abusive Behaviour

The Trust and its staff are committed to providing high quality care to patients within the department. However, we wish to advise all patients / visitors that the following inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Swearing
- Threatening / abusive behaviour
- Verbal / physical abuse

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw from treating patients who are threatening / abusive / violent and ensuring the removal of those persons from the premises.

All acts of criminal violence and aggression will be notified to the Police immediately.

Risk Management Strategy

The Trust welcomes comments and suggestions from patients and visitors that could help to reduce risk.

Perhaps you have experienced something whilst in hospital, whilst attending as an outpatient or as a visitor and you felt at risk.

Please tell a member of staff on the ward or in the department you are attending / visiting.

Moving & Handling

The Trust operates a Minimal Lifting Policy, which in essence means patients are only ever lifted by nursing staff in an emergency situation.

Patients are always encouraged to help themselves as much as possible when mobilising, and if unable to do so, equipment may be used to assist in their safe transfer.

If you have any questions regarding moving and handling of patients within the Trust, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department you are visiting.



Information for patients and visitors

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

Diana Princess of Wales Hospital
Scartho Road
Grimsby
DN33 2BA

Scunthorpe General Hospital
Cliff Gardens
Scunthorpe
DN15 7BH

Goole & District Hospital
Woodland Avenue
Goole
DN14 6RX

03033 306999

www.nlg.nhs.uk

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