

Who is seen in the Clinical Neuropsychology service?

We provide assessment and rehabilitation for people who have suffered or are suspected as having an injury or illness to the brain.

What do Clinical Neuropsychologists do?

We are qualified Clinical Psychologists registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) who specialise and complete further training in working with health conditions which affect the brain. A Clinical Neuropsychologist has expertise in how behaviour and thinking skills (cognitive abilities) are related to brain structures and systems. We can assess and help you with thinking skills (e.g. memory, concentration, and judgement), mood, and behaviour changes that can occur after a brain injury or illness. We work with individuals, couples, families and carers, whilst often working jointly with other members of a clinical team. We also have good working relationships with local organisations and will be able to offer information about other sources of support.

What to expect at a first appointment with a Clinical Neuropsychologist

The first appointment generally lasts between 50-60 minutes.

You will have a chance to talk about your problems and how they affect you. You may be asked to complete some questionnaires. The clinician may also ask for your agreement to speak to a family member or friend to get their views. Your clinician will discuss and agree whether further help is needed, such as support with mood difficulties or further therapy.

If you have difficulties with thinking skills then the clinician will ask you about the types of changes you have noticed, and the effect of these on your day-to-day life. The clinician will discuss whether it would be helpful to carry out some cognitive assessments (these are generally paper-and-pencil tests of thinking skills which are carried out with the clinician). In some cases with your agreement, your clinician will suggest starting these assessments during the first appointment.

What happens with the assessment information?

A summary of the information gathered during the first appointment will be written and sent to the person who referred you to the service and to your GP. Information about your care in this service is stored as part of your NHS Lothian health record.

Who will you see at your first appointment?

You will usually be seen by a qualified Clinical Neuropsychologist. In some cases you may be seen by a Clinical Psychologist in training or an Assistant Psychologist. These clinicians have had the training required to work with you by themselves, however they must also report back to and get guidance from an experienced Clinical Neuropsychologist. Sometimes the responsible Clinical Neuropsychologist will join you for one or more of your appointments either to understand your situation better or to observe and give feedback to your clinician to help them in their development.

Attendance

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can arrange a suitable alternative appointment for you and allocate the unused appointment time to someone else.

It can help to bring a relative or close friend to the first appointment. This is because it may be difficult for you to recall everything that is discussed and your friend or relative can help you with this. They can also often give helpful information from their point of view about how things are for you and your family.

If you normally wear glasses for reading or use a hearing aid, please bring them along to the first appointment.

Contacting us

If you wish to comment on this leaflet, require a large print version, or have questions about your appointment or the service please contact us via:

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Complaints and compliments

If you are pleased or unhappy with our service, or have any comments to make, please talk to our staff – we welcome your feedback!

Alternatively you can contact the NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team to make a complaint or to give feedback centrally at: NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team, Waverley Gate, 2 – 4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EG **0131 536 3370**