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or contact our

Patient Advice and Liaison Service on:

Telephone: 0800 953 0045

(Available Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm)

Text: 07985 883 509

Fax: 0121 678 4456

Email: [pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk)

Outside of customer relations opening hours, our switchboard operates 24 hours a day, Tel: 0121 301 0000, which can act

as a

signpost if required.

# Mental Health Care Clusters and Care Packages

Information for service users,  
carers, families and friends





## What is a care cluster?

A care cluster in mental health is a framework for planning and organising mental health services and the care and support that can be provided for individuals.

They have been developed to ensure better outcomes and more choice for service users. They are an aid to help clinicians manage their time more effectively and a guide to using evidence based interventions.

When someone is referred to our mental health services they will be assessed. Following assessment and taking into account their individual needs we will decide on an appropriate care cluster for that person and this will then determine their pathway of care.

## What is a care package?

In mental health we now know quite a lot about what helps people recover and stay well. This is what will be in the care package for each cluster for you to look at. Even so, what works for one person is often different to what works for another, so the final say about your care rests with you and the team supporting you. It's important that you help choose the treatment and approach that you feel will work for you.

The care package covers the input of all the different professionals in the team so it includes medication, talking therapies and support getting you back to the lifestyle that best suits you.

Your individual care plan will include your care package and any interventions recommended.

**Use this space to write down any questions you may have for your clinical team/ care co-ordinator.**



## What can I expect from my care co-ordinator and doctor?

Your care co-ordinator will talk with you about the cluster you are allocated. They will answer any questions you may have. You can be involved in deciding which care cluster you are allocated.

You will be involved in developing your own care plan that is specific to you.

## What if I don't agree with the cluster I have been put in?

If you are unhappy with the cluster you are in, you can challenge your doctor and or care co-ordinator.

To make a comment or suggestion, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact the Trust's customer relations team (Patient Advice and Liaison Service, PALS). Call them on 0800 953 0045, text 07985 883 509 or email [pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk)

To ensure that service users are offered the best choices and most effective treatments, clinicians can review the tools where they feel that the that particular treatment option is not helpful. They will use their clinical judgement and discuss with you the best options is in your recovery

The main focus is on individual need and the care package that is right for you, not the cluster itself.

## How did they get here?

Care clusters were developed as a national programme by clinicians and service users. Within our Trust we have, with the help of clinicians and those who use services, developed them further. The mental health care pathway is divided into 21 groups which are called care clusters. Each cluster considers the level of need and risk that someone has, in addition to their diagnosis. The 21 clusters (More information can be found at [www.bsmhft.nhs.uk](http://www.bsmhft.nhs.uk)) are divided into three main groups:

**Non psychotic** - this group covers the needs of people suffering from anxiety and depressive illnesses. It also includes phobic, obsessive compulsive and eating disorders.

**Psychotic** - this group covers the needs of people suffering from a psychosis, such as schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder. *This term covers a broad range of illnesses, some severe at times, but all are manageable.*

**Organic** - this group covers the needs of people suffering from dementia, including Alzheimer's and other forms of brain injury affecting peoples' mental health.

## How will I be clustered?

When a service user meets with a clinician they will discuss which cluster best fits their current needs.

The assessment grades the degree of symptoms and enables the clinician and team to identify the most appropriate Interventions.

Each cluster has a set of scores (0—4) which relate to the level of someone's mental health needs. A score of 0 shows that there are no problems in a particular area. A score of 4 indicates that there are severe problems.

Throughout treatment service users might move into different clusters depending on their current mental health needs.

Within our trust we are using a computerised system to help us determine the care cluster, however clinicians are being encouraged to focus on service users' needs in relation to their mental health problems.

We are, with our commissioners, updating the clustering tool to improve the way clinicians use the assessment structure and help service users and carers fully understand how the process works.

## How will this help me?

Each cluster has a core set of treatment options, that will inform your care plan, designed to meet your needs. Some aspects of the packages, such as working in partnership with carers, are offered in all clusters. Other packages are specific, to meet the needs of people in a particular cluster.

The care packages offer a range of options which may help to meet your needs. You will discuss these with your care co-ordinator to create a care plan which will be delivered by your care team. You may choose to include your carer/s in this discussion if you wish.

The support described in your care plan may be provided by a number of different mental health services, including the

## When will I be allocated a cluster?

Following a mental health assessment, you will be put in the most appropriate cluster to receive support and treatment from mental health services. A care plan will be developed based on your needs.

Certain groups of service users who are accessing forensic, learning disability, and a few other specialist services do not as yet come under the care clusters but may do so in the future.

## When will my cluster be reviewed?

Clusters consider the likely course of your illness, how this affects you, how it impacts on your daily living and the risks for you or others. It is usual for someone to change clusters when their needs change. Your cluster will be reviewed when;

- You have a care review meeting, although your cluster may remain unchanged,
- There is a significant change to your needs
- You are preparing to move from a care cluster
- You reach the end of the fixed review period which may differ from one cluster to another
- You can ask to have your cluster reviewed

