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Inpatient and outpatient services



If you are experiencing a mental health problem

If you think that you, a relative or a friend, might be experiencing some form of mental health problem you should make an appointment with your GP.

Most people who have a physical health problem go to their GP for help and advice. It is the same for mental health problems.

What happens if my GP refers me?

When you visit your GP, he or she will begin to understand what sort of problem you are experiencing by asking you about your symptoms or feelings and discussing these with you.

Most people with mental health problems are treated or helped by their GP or someone from the wider primary care team such as a counsellor or nurse. Birmingham Healthy Minds and Solihull Healthy Minds offer support for common mental health problems. Your GP can refer you or you can refer yourself, visit www.birminghamhealthyminds.org or www.covwarkpt.nhs.uk

If you suffer from a more serious or long-term mental health problem, your GP may refer you to one of our community mental health teams (CMHTs).

Outpatient services

Community mental health teams are the main point of referral into more specialist services and they will assess your condition and offer support as well as treatment options.

You will be invited for an initial assessment and may be seen by a psychiatrist or another member of the community mental health team.

They will ask you questions which will help them to formulate a diagnosis and they will discuss treatment options with you.

Checklist - questions to ask your psychiatrist or member of the team involved in your care

This checklist suggests some questions you may want to ask about your illness, treatment, care and recovery.

You may be able to get some of this information from other members of the team who are involved in your care.

The questions below are a guide only - some may not be relevant to you, or you may have other questions.

About the illness

- What diagnosis do I have?

If a diagnosis has been made

- What are the symptoms that suggest this diagnosis?
- What tests have already been done?
- Are there any other tests that might be needed?
- Have any physical problems been found and what needs to be done about them?
- Why has this happened to me?
- Will I get better?
- Where can I get written information about my problem?

If a diagnosis has not yet been made

- What are the possible diagnoses you are considering?
- What tests have already been done?
- Are there any other tests that might be needed?

About care and treatment

- What are the aims of my care and treatment?
- Where can I get written information about the treatment I will have/am having?
- Who will be responsible for my care (named nurse, care co-ordinator or doctor)?
- What exactly do they do?
- How often will they see me?
- Who else will be involved in my treatment?

- How often will the psychiatrist see me?
- What are the plans for my treatment?
- Do I have any choices?
- How long will the treatment take?
- Would talking treatments be helpful? For example cognitive behavioural therapy, or family therapy. If so, will they be available in my area?
- What happens if I refuse to have the suggested treatment?
- Is there any way I can help myself?

Care programme approach (CPA) or care support

- What is the CPA?
- Am I on the CPA? If not, why not?
- Who is responsible for organising it?
- What difference will this make to me?

If I am not satisfied with my treatment and care, who do I speak to?

- To make comments.
- To get a second opinion.
- To make a complaint.

Getting help

- How can I get in touch with you, especially if I am not in hospital?
- How can I arrange to see you?
- What do I do if I am worried that I am becoming ill?
- Who do I contact in an emergency?
- Are there any local support, self-help or advocacy groups that I could get in touch with?

Carers and my treatment

- Who is/are my carer(s)?
- Will my carer be involved in discussions concerning my care and treatment?
- Does my carer have to be involved in discussions about every detail of my care?
- Can I decide that my carer may know only about some details of my care and treatment?
- How can it help to have my carer involved in discussions about me?
- Can I refuse to allow my carer to be involved in any of these discussions?

Medication issues

- What medication am I on?

What should the benefits of this medication be?

- In the short-term.
- In the long-term.

What are the possible side effects of this medication?

- In the short-term.
- In the long-term.

Managing the medication

- Why have you chosen this particular medication?
- How long will I have to take it for?
- Are there any other medications that could be used if this one does not work?
- Is the lowest effective dose being prescribed?
- What symptoms would mean the dose should be changed?
- Can I take a low dose and increase it when necessary?
- Why am I on different types of medication?
- How often will my medication be reviewed?
- What shall I do if I have any unpleasant side effects?
- What will happen if I stop the medication?
- Do you have any written information about this medication?

Hospital treatment

- Do I need to be admitted to hospital? If so, for how long?
- If I have to go to hospital, which one will it be?
- What arrangements will be made for me after I leave hospital?

If not admitted to hospital

- If I am not admitted to hospital and my carer cannot look after me, who will care for me?
- If my carer needs support, where can they get it?

Self-help

- What can I do to help myself get better?
- How can I contact other people who have been through the same experiences?

You may have other questions you wish to ask too.

- _____
- _____
- _____

What happens if you are admitted to hospital?

If the mental health problem you are experiencing gets worse or if for any reason it becomes inappropriate for you to stay at home, your GP or a member of your community team may suggest that you go into hospital for some treatment. Usually this will be as an **informal** patient. This means that you are free to leave hospital and do not have to accept treatment. However, if you become more unwell you may be asked to remain on a ward for reassessment.

Sometimes people are treated as **formal** patients. If your GP or another health professional thinks you need hospital treatment and you refuse, you can be admitted to hospital against your wishes under one of the sections of the Mental Health Act. Most people who are admitted to hospital stay for a short time, usually between one and four weeks.

Prior to admission

These services may be used to decide whether or not to admit you to hospital. They may decide that there are services which could help you at home or in the community.

Rapid Assessment, Interface and Discharge (RAID)

These teams operate at general hospital sites in Birmingham and Solihull. They assist with mental health issues that arise in accident and emergency departments and on the regular hospital wards.

Street Triage

Street Triage teams operate in Birmingham and Solihull in partnership with the West Midlands Police and West Midlands Ambulance Service. They will assist when people experience mental health difficulties in public places or where the police become involved.

Place of Safety

A Place of Safety is somewhere used for a mental health assessment prior to a decision over whether or not someone needs admitting to a mental health facility.

Home treatment

Home treatment teams may be able to help look after you at home, preventing a hospital admission or enabling an earlier discharge. They are an expert team guided by a psychiatrist and staffed by nurses, support workers, occupational therapists and psychologists. They will come to your home as often as it is necessary during your illness. Home treatment will arrange a hospital stay if this becomes necessary, and may also look after you after discharge from hospital until you are well enough to return to using your community mental health team or GP.

The admission process

When you first go into hospital, you may be seen by a number of different people. First of all, a nurse will ask you for some basic information about yourself. This will include your name, address, next of kin and your GP's address. You may also have a physical examination.

You will then be interviewed by a psychiatrist so that he or she can find out how you feel at the moment and decide what treatment you need. Sometimes the nurse and the doctor will interview you together.

You will be given a tour of the ward and told how it works. You should also be given some written information about the ward you are in. It is best not to bring into hospital anything valuable, but if you do you must let staff know so that they can note this.

A psychiatric hospital is different to a general hospital. Most patients do not stay in bed. Patients are encouraged to engage in activities and to go outside where possible.

Let staff know if there is anything you are worried about and don't be afraid to ask if there is anything you do not understand.

During your stay

Treatment in hospital usually involves some sort of medication. There should be information on your ward about the medication you are taking. You may also be given other non-drug treatments such as psychotherapy or occupational therapy. The nursing staff will also talk to you about your problems and help you to manage your thoughts and feelings.

You will have a named nurse who is responsible for you during your stay. You will also have a deputy for when your nurse is off duty. These can be good people to talk to if there are things you are concerned about.

While you are in hospital, you will be involved in putting together your care plan. This is where your care and treatment is written down. It will also name one person who will be your care co-ordinator. You may have a different expert consultant for your time in hospital.

You may have a locker for your belongings. A little money is useful, but not too much. You will have your own bedroom, toilet and shower room. There will only be limited storage space for clothes and belongings, so do not bring too much with you into hospital.

Privacy and dignity

Your privacy and dignity is important to us. You can always expect these 10 pledges from us:

1. We will ensure a safe environment for everyone.
2. We will encourage you to be involved in your care and care plan.
3. We will offer you choice and opportunities in your treatments, including medication and therapy, wherever we can.
4. We will treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and respect.
5. We will ensure there will be “No decision about you, without you.”
6. We will protect your privacy, modesty and confidentiality.
7. Your compliments and comments will be gratefully received, and concerns swiftly resolved.
8. We aim to empower you as much as we can, and support access to others who can further this.
9. We will guarantee your rights to information, advice, advocacy, and can guide you to them.
10. We will support your families, carer or support networks.

If we don't meet all of these pledges, let us know. A member of our customer relations (PALS) team will listen to your concerns and help you get the service you deserve. See page 11 for contact details.

If you or someone else encounters harm or abuse, contact our safeguarding team on 0121 301 1111. In an emergency, call 999.

Religion and spirituality

Your ward manager can put you in touch with religious or spiritual contacts. At our hospitals you will find multi-faith rooms. At many of our hospitals there are regular timetabled visits by religious or spiritual leaders including Muslim Imams, Church of England Chaplains and Catholic Priests.

We can make arrangements for other religious or spiritual leaders to visit, contact our head of spiritual care on 0121 301 1111.

Caring for carers

A carer is anyone who gives regular and substantial unpaid care to a partner, relative or friend. They can be of any age and from any background. Care can be regular day-to-day care, or helping out in a crisis.

Caring for people can be very rewarding. At times, it can also be very tough. Carers may feel that caring takes up all of their spare time and is a drain emotionally.

If you are a carer, there is help and support for you too.

What support is available for carers?

There is a wide variety of support for carers. This is organised by our Trust, social care departments and local voluntary agencies.

Carers' assessments

All carers are legally entitled to have their physical and mental health needs assessed when they are caring for someone. Please speak to a member of staff about getting an assessment.

Carers' plans

Please speak to a member of staff. A carer's plan is a written document which outlines what sort of help you require to meet your needs as a carer.

Carer support workers

They can help you to continue caring. Please ask a member of staff to put you in touch or contact our customer relations (PALS) for further information leaflets.

Useful numbers

Please speak to a member of staff if you need further information, alternatively please see below for useful numbers.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

CQC is an independent regulator of health and social care in England.
Care Quality Commission National Correspondence
Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA.
Telephone: 0300 061 6161, Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5.30pm
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk
Website: www.cqc.org.uk

See Me

See Me is our local service user involvement team.

Telephone: 0800 694 0212
Email: seeme@bsmhft.nhs.uk
Website: www.bsmhft.nhs.uk

Customer relations team (PALS)

On most wards there is a See Me user involvement worker, visiting customer relations (PALS) worker or independent advocate who you can speak with. Alternatively, you can contact PALS directly.

Telephone: 0800 953 0045
Email: pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk
Website: www.bsmhft.nhs.uk

They can put you in touch with local independent advocacy services, Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHAs) and the national complaints advocacy service. Advocates are independent and will help you raise any concerns.

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If you have access to the internet, you can find out more about the Trust and our services on our website www.bsmhft.nhs.uk or from customer relations (PALS) on 0800 953 0045.

If you have any queries regarding this leaflet, please call the service user, carer and public engagement lead at Trust headquarters on 0121 301 1111.

We can help you access information in other languages or formats.

Please ask a member of staff for a copy or contact our customer relations (PALS) on 0800 953 0045 or email pals@bsmhft.nhs.uk

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Improving mental health wellbeing