

Patient Information Leaflet

Neuropsychological Assessment

Produced By: The Memory Service

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What is a neuropsychological assessment?

A neuropsychological assessment looks at the functioning of the brain and is conducted by a clinical psychologist. It is not a medical procedure and does not involve brain scans, blood tests, injections or any other medical process. It forms one part of a holistic assessment and treatment plan.

A neuropsychological assessment typically includes a background interview during which your history is reviewed as well as formal tests of memory, concentration and other abilities. These tests consist of a series of paper and pencil tests and other activities.

At your first meeting with the clinical psychologist you will have the opportunity to talk about your difficulties and to ask questions. The clinical psychologist will also ask about other aspects of your life so as to get a more complete picture of you as a person and your situation.

The nature and length of the formal testing will depend on the nature of your concerns and difficulties. The assessment is usually completed within three or four sessions each lasting between an hour and one-and-a-half hours.

The clinical psychologist will usually, with your permission, speak to a close family member or friend who can provide another perspective on your concerns and background history.

How do I prepare for this assessment?

It is helpful if you are well rested before the assessment, because if you are tired you may not be able to do your best on the tests.

If you need eyeglasses or hearing aids please make sure you have these with you during your assessment.

Please have available a list of prescription medications that you are currently taking.

What are the possible risks and/or benefits of the assessment?

You may feel anxious about having to do a 'test', particularly if you are worried about not performing well. However, most people find these tests interesting and enjoyable.

The assessment will provide detailed information about the nature of your cognitive (information processing) functioning. The assessment will aim to determine areas of strength as well as areas of weakness. This information may assist your doctor in making decisions about your diagnosis. This information can also be used by your clinical psychologist to help you find ways of coping with your difficulties.

What if I don't want to have a neuropsychological assessment?

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you would like to participate in a neuropsychological assessment. You can discuss this with your clinical psychologist during the initial session.

What about confidentiality?

The results of the evaluation are considered confidential.

However, a clinical psychologist would routinely write to your GP and/or the person who referred you to summarise the outcome of your assessment.

If you have queries about confidentiality do discuss this with your clinical psychologist. Your clinical psychologist may need to break confidentiality if there were a serious risk of harm either to yourself or other people. They would, if at all possible, discuss this with you first.

If you have any further queries or for more information please contact the Clinical Psychologist at:

Memory Services
South Block
St. Mary's Hospital
01983 534411

You can get further information on all sorts of health issues through NHS interactive available through Sky TV or online at: <http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/>

For Health advice and out of hours GP service please call Island Health Line on 0845 6031007

We Value Your Views On Our Service

If you wish to comment on the care which you, your relative or friend has received, we will be pleased to hear from you. Please speak to the person in charge of the ward, clinic or service in the first instance or ask them to contact the Quality Team. If you wish to contact them directly, telephone on 534850.

Alternatively you may prefer to write to:

Chief Executive
Isle Of Wight NHS Trust
St Mary's Hospital
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 5TG

All NHS sites are no smoking areas.

If you would like help and advice to stop smoking please call: 01983 550386 to talk to Island Quitters.

Ref: mh&ld/pils/neuro