

Patient Information Leaflet

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy Groups  
(CST)

**Produced By:** The Memory Service

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## **What is Cognitive Stimulation Therapy?**

Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST) is an evidence-based group treatment for people with mild to moderate dementia. It is delivered by specialist nurse practitioners. CST consists of 16 sessions of themed activities, spread over 8 weeks. A typical session would involve an informal introduction, a chat about current news stories and a programme of activities arranged around a particular theme.

CST is recommended as a treatment for people with dementia by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE).

CST aims to engage and stimulate people in a friendly and enjoyable group setting. Research into CST shows that it improves thinking abilities, as well as general well-being.

## **Who is Cognitive Stimulation Therapy for?**

CST is recommended for people who have a diagnosis of mild to moderate dementia. If you have been referred to the Memory Service and have received a diagnosis of dementia from a psychiatrist, you will receive a post-diagnostic appointment with a nurse. CST is the next step for those looking to improve their memory, thinking abilities and quality of life, in a positive and supportive environment.

What patients say:

*"I really enjoy coming to the group, we have so much fun."*

*"The group has helped improve my confidence. It's great!!!"*

*"It has been fun...I'm sure my confidence has improved."*

*"Since I started coming I feel my memory has improved."*

*"I feel the group is very good for me and I enjoy meeting other people."*

*"The group helps to keep me focused and I enjoy coming very much."*

## **What can I expect from the group?**

CST occurs twice per week for 8 weeks. Each session lasts two hours and includes a wide variety of themed activities. The sessions are facilitated by two experienced members of staff from the Memory Service. The activities are chosen to be both stimulating and fun.

An important aspect of the group is being able to socialise and share experiences with other members. Everybody is encouraged to participate but nobody is “put on the spot”. The groups are relaxed, light-hearted and fun, and group members support each other to cope with memory loss. CST groups consist of a maximum of 8 people.

Refreshments are available at the group at a cost of £1 per cup of tea or coffee.

All CST sessions are evidence-based, focussing on strengthening and maintaining:

- orientation
- short- and long-term memory
- hearing / sight
- focus / attention / concentration
- understanding / recognition / language
- problem solving / reasoning abilities
- language skills / visual and spatial skills

## **Maintenance CST**

At the end of the CST programme a nurse from the CST groups will review your care needs. You may be invited to attend the Maintenance CST Group. This involves attending one session per week over a 24-week period. The weekly sessions are 4½ hours long and include a lunch break. Lunch can be purchased at the venue for £5, which also includes tea and coffee for the day. Alternatively you can bring your own lunch, in which case tea and coffee are £1 per cup. This group includes similar activities to the 8 week programme and provides time for social interaction. This maintenance group is usually larger than the CST group.

## **What happens at the end of my treatment programme?**

At the end of the 24-week maintenance treatment programme, you may wish to continue in one of the community groups run by voluntary organisations. You may be eligible for assistance with funding through a Personal Budget. To request further information regarding an Adult Social Care Assessment please ask one of the Memory Service staff who will be happy to advise you.



**If you require this leaflet in another language, large print or another format, please contact the Quality Team, telephone 01983 534850, who will advise you.**

Valuables should not be brought into the hospital. If patients have to bring in valuable items they should ask a nurse to store them safely and request a receipt for the items. You may not be able to have the valuable items returned if the time of discharge from hospital is out of hours.

We are sorry but the Trust cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to items not given for safe keeping.

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 the NHS 111 service on: 111

### **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: Freephone 0800 169 0 169 to talk to the NHS Smoking Helpline.

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