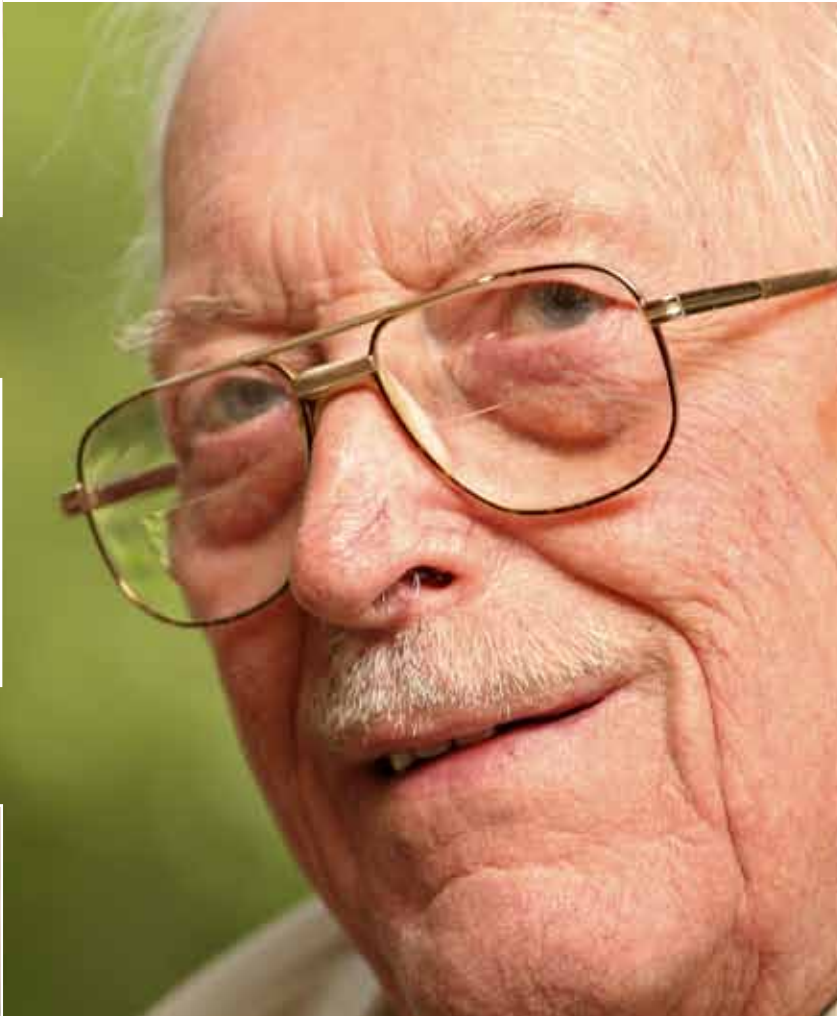




Outpatients



Many people worry about being referred to a psychiatrist. This might seem daunting, but one in four of us will have a mental health problem at some time in our lives. Modern treatments are very effective.



What is the Outpatient Clinic Service Older Peoples Mental Health Service?

The Older Peoples Mental Health service provides mental health assessments and ongoing care for older adults over 65 years who have mental health conditions and adults of all ages with dementia. The outpatient clinic service sees new patients who have been referred for initial assessment or current patients for a medical review.

Who will you see at the Appointment?

You will see either the consultant psychiatrist, the specialty doctor or a junior doctor. The consultant psychiatrist and the specialty doctor are both medical doctors with special training in mental illnesses, emotional problems and dementia. The consultant tends to be a more senior doctor. The junior doctor is a doctor in training, but who may have many years of experience. They work under the supervision of the consultant psychiatrist.

Who Uses the Outpatient Service?

The doctor aims to assess or review anyone experiencing mental health problems including problems with their memory and thinking.

Where do the Assessments Take Place?

Assessments and reviews are undertaken at a clinic or, in certain circumstances, within a person's own home, residential or nursing home.

Can Someone Accompany me to my Outpatient Clinic Appointment?

We recommend that you bring someone who knows you well (a family member, carer or friend) with you to the outpatient clinic appointment.

How will the Information Collected About me at the Outpatient Appointment be Used?

Your consent to participate in the assessment or review will be requested before the process begins and confidentiality will be maintained in most cases. There are occasions where people within the health service break confidentiality due to concerns about the safety of the people they are working with or others. All employees within the Western Health and Social Care Trust follow specific rules or guidelines set out by the Trust in relation to capacity and consent. In cases where a person may be unable to give consent to an assessment it may still proceed if it felt to be in a patient's best interests

What Will Happen at the Appointment?

The first appointment with a doctor normally takes an hour and involves the doctor gathering information about:

- your current problem
- why you have come to see them now
- your past life and how you are living now
- your physical health
- your thoughts and feelings
- how you get on with other people.

The appointment may include some brief tests of thinking and memory if you feel comfortable doing these. It can feel like a lot of questions – and it may not be obvious as to why the psychiatrist needs to ask them. They are asked to help the psychiatrist understand your situation as clearly as possible.

Where appropriate, carers will be given the opportunity to discuss their concerns.

What Should you Bring With you?

Please bring an up to date list of medications and wear glasses or hearing devices if you require them.

How can I Make the Best use of my Time With the Doctor?

Review / follow up medical appointments usually last 30mins. In order that both you and the doctor make the best use of this time the tips below may help.

You might want to ask about:

- Information about your diagnosis and treatment
- How best to sort out your problems
- The impact of physical health problems on you or your relatives mental state
- Your treatment plan
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency, or even just if your situation changes
- How to deal with the impact of mental health problems and dementia on managing finances
- Local services including self-help groups.

You may wish to make a list of questions to ask the doctor as a reminder.

What Happens Next?

Everyone who attends their appointment will then discuss with the doctor what information has been gathered and what will happen next, known as feedback. This feedback will also be forwarded to your GP, care manager and staff within your nursing home where appropriate. Where the assessment of a person shows that a person does not need a specialised mental health team to work with them they may be discharged back to their GP. Advice will also be given on appropriate support services provided by the community sector.

The doctor may recommend any of the following as a next step following the appointment:

- Changes to your medication
- Talking therapies such as cognitive behavioural therapy
- Advice on practical ways to cope with your problem.
- Advice about healthy living – exercise, diet and how to organise your day.
- A referral to another service.
- Another appointment with the psychiatrist or another team member.
- To advise your GP.
- If you are very unwell, you might be offered immediate treatment at home or in hospital. If your psychiatrist feels this is necessary, they will talk this over with you.



Can a Family Member ask to see the Doctor Alone?

A family member may have questions or concerns that they want to discuss with the doctor alone. Please do not hesitate to ask. The doctor is willing to help where he/she can but time may have to be set aside outside of the clinic to do this.

Future Appointments

You may not always see the same psychiatrist. If you see one of the team members regularly, they will work closely with your psychiatrist. The team may discuss your treatment at regular meetings to make sure that you are getting the best help.



Complaints and Compliments

The Western Health & Social Care Trust is committed to providing high quality services. However, if you have a complaint about our services, tell us about it. We need to know if our performance is not up to standard or if you are unhappy, so that we can learn and improve the quality of services we provide. We will take your complaint seriously and treat it in confidence.

Making a complaint does not affect your rights and will not result in the loss of any service you have been assessed as requiring.

Initially, you can speak to any of the staff who are dealing with your treatment or care and they will try to resolve your concerns straight away. If they can't, they will tell you what to do next. We also have a Complaints Manager and Complaints Officers who can help you. Contact details as follows:

Complaints Department
Trust Headquarters
MDEC Building
Altnagelvin Area Hospital, Londonderry,
BT47 6SB

Tel No: 02871345171 Ext: 214130/214121/214122/214142/214194

Or Direct Dial No: 02871 611 226

SMS Text Facility: 07780 949796

Email: complaints.department@westerntrust.hscni.net

Compliments

If you would like to give us a compliment you can do so in writing or by email to compliments@westerntrust.hscni.net. We will use your compliments to highlight good practice.



Contact Information

Strabane/Cityside

Oak Villa
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L'Derry
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Waterside/Limavady

Oak Villa
Gransha Park
L'Derry
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West Tyrone

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Fermanagh

Cedar Villa
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**Opening Hours: 9am to 5pm
Monday to Friday.**