

What do clinical psychologists do?

After you and the clinical psychologist have assessed your current situation and problems you may decide to plan a short series of appointments to examine ways of addressing the difficulties. As well as individual consultation meetings, clinical psychologists also offer counselling and a range of psychological therapies.

Individual Therapy

An agreed series of meetings with a clinical psychologist to address personal issues of concern.

The length and frequency of therapy is negotiated to suit individual needs.

Groupwork

The CFS/ME six week group is facilitated by clinical psychologists, physiotherapists, dieticians and a medical consultant. The sessions are structured and are focussed on sharing information and skills to understand your symptoms and manage your recovery from C.F.S. It uses CPT and mindfulness approaches and the sessions are designed to be flexible in order to respond to the needs of the group as they arise.

The group meets for a series of follow-up meetings over the twelve months after the group end, to discuss coping and skills and review any difficulties that may have arisen.

Clinical psychologists in training

Clinical work that is closely supervised by a qualified and experienced clinical psychologist is a very important part of the training to be a clinical psychologist. As we are a teaching hospital, at times clinical psychologists in training are involved with psychological assessments and interventions. If this applies to you please discuss any queries with the clinical psychologist.

Clinical psychology and you

Clinical psychology aims to provide a service to clients that is respectful of individual lifestyles, and sensitive to family, social and cultural issues.

If you are interested in finding out more about the clinical psychology service please feel free to talk to your consultant or any member of the chronic fatigue service.

Alternatively you can contact the clinical psychology service directly for further information on 0207 601 7827.

East London
NHS Foundation Trust



Barts and The London
NHS Trust



Chronic Fatigue Service

**CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
AND CFS/ME**

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The chronic fatigue service

The chronic fatigue syndormw/ME service at St Bartholomew's Hospital is a well-established specialist service for people with CFS/ME. Clinical psychology is one of the services available as part of the multi-disciplinary service incorporating medical care and physiotherapy. The clinical psychology service provides a successful six-week group programme for patients with CFS/ME and also offers fixed-term psychological therapies including CBT to help people manage their recovery from CFS/ME and associated health and emotional difficulties.

What is clinical psychology?

Clinical psychologists work with people in a variety of settings, most commonly in health centres, clinics and hospitals. They have academic and specialist professional training in the application of principles of psychology to health and emotional problems. They are not medical doctors and therefore do not prescribe drugs. Clinical psychologists use their psychological knowledge and understanding of behaviour, emotions, thoughts and experiences to help people with problems connected with health, relationships and emotional well-being and to assist people to cope with illnesses such as CFS/ME.

What happens during the first appointment?

The initial meeting will be an opportunity for you and the clinical psychologist to meet and assess your situation and concerns. You will have the opportunity to talk about your situation and to ask questions. You will discuss ways of addressing your needs or solving your problems and you and the clinical psychologist may agree to meet for further sessions.

Sometimes the clinical psychologist may suggest a referral to other agencies that specialise in particular problems or to services that are nearer to a person's home or work.

Confidentiality

Whatever is spoken about in the session is confidential. It is usual for clinical psychologist to write to the person who referred you, and your G.P. summarising the outcome of the meeting and when the sessions end. If there was a serious risk of harm either to yourself or to other people, the clinical psychologist would act on this but would consult with you where possible if this was the case. If you have queries about confidentiality do discuss this with the clinical psychologist.

What kinds of problems can clinical psychologists help with?

Within the CFS/ME service, Clinical psychologists see patients for a wide range of issues such as:

- managing fatigue and other symptoms
- stress related to medical problems
- activity pacing
- anxiety, depression or mood difficulties
- chronic pain
- assertion and self-esteem
- dealing with relapse
- family or couples sessions

How do I get to see a clinical psychologist?

If you are interested in meeting with a clinical psychologist, please speak to your consultant or any member of the service about a referral. You will then be sent a letter offering an initial assessment appointment as soon as one becomes available. The initial meeting will last about an hour.