This leaflet is for people experiencing memory problems.

It explains why you have been referred to the Memory Service, what happens when you come for assessment and what happens afterwards.

About us

The Memory Service provides assessment, diagnosis and treatment for people who are experiencing difficulties with their memory such as dementia. We tend to see people aged 65 and over, though in some cases we see younger people.

Why have I been referred?

Most of the people we see are referred by their GP after reporting a memory problem. Memory problems are not always the result of dementia – they may be caused by factors such as infections, depression and vitamin imbalance. Your GP will usually try to rule some of these out before referring you to us.

The assessment process

Finding out the cause of a memory problem involves several different assessments, which may include:

- a first assessment at the Memory Service
- a brain scan at your local hospital
- a heart scan at your local hospital
- an appointment at our diagnostic clinic.

In some cases we may also ask you to have a neuropsychological assessment and/or an occupational therapy assessment to further assess your memory and day-to-day functioning. The whole process takes around two months.
What happens at your first assessment

At your first assessment you will usually be seen by a Memory Service professional who will ask you about your memory difficulties, your physical health and some details about your past and current life. They will also test your different thinking abilities. This appointment can last up to one and a half hours and we recommend that a relative or friend accompanies you to help with our questions. If you have some questions you would like to ask us, you may find it helpful to write these down and bring them with you.

What happens next

If appropriate, you may then be sent for a brain and heart scan at your local hospital, and possibly for other specialist assessments. Once we have the results of these tests we will invite you to attend a clinic with
a doctor or a senior member of the team. They will discuss the results of your assessments with you and, if appropriate, give you a diagnosis.

At the end of the assessment process one of the following will happen:

• you may receive a diagnosis of a memory problem (such as dementia) and treatment options will be discussed with you

• it may not be possible to make a definite diagnosis and we may ask you to come back in 6-12 months for a review

• our assessment may suggest that you do not have a memory problem and you will be discharged and directed to other services where appropriate.

**Treatment**

If you are diagnosed with a memory problem, such as dementia, one of our treatment options may be suitable for you. While there is currently no cure for dementia, our treatments are designed to either slow down its effects or help you cope with any emotional difficulties associated with it. We offer the following treatments:

• medication for Alzheimer’s type dementia

• medication to help with associated problems such as anxiety

• group therapy

• individual, couple or family therapy

• occupational therapy.

**Crisis**

You can contact us Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm. Outside these hours you should contact the Oxleas Urgent Advice Line on 0845 608 0525. Alternatively you can visit A&E or call 999 if you are at risk in some way.

**Confidentiality**

All our staff are required to abide by a strict code of conduct on confidentiality. We will only share information with those who need to know in order to provide good quality care. We will ask at your assessment about contacting other health professionals such as your GP and you can tell us if there is anyone you do not want us to talk to.
Your opinion matters

We are committed to providing the highest standards of care, so we welcome your views on the service we provide. If you would like to comment, make a suggestion or make a complaint, please speak to the person you normally see or ask to speak to the team manager. You may also like to speak to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) by ringing the freephone number: 0800 9177159.

Contact us

Bexley Memory Service
Upton Centre
14 Upton Road
Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 8LQ

T: 020 8301 7900
F: 020 8301 7926

There is a small car park at the front of the building and free parking in the street.

Nearest train station: Bexleyheath

Bus Routes: 96, B11, B12, B14, B15, B16, 89, 422, 486 – all stop at Upton Road.
How to contact the Bexley Memory Service

You can phone us on:
T: 020 8301 7900

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Bexleyheath
Kent
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