

## Will I definitely be offered therapy following an assessment?

Depending on the decision made during your assessment you may see a therapist locally or it may be appropriate to refer you to another service that can more closely meet your needs. Alternatively it may be decided that now is not the best time to enter into therapy. Other possible treatment options can be discussed. There may be a wait between your initial assessment and commencing therapy.

## What are the risks?

Focusing on your problems can make you feel worse. Often this is a necessary stage in treatment. You should tell your therapist if this happens to you and if you have any other concerns related to the therapy.

## How often will I have therapy?

Therapy sessions are often weekly at the same time or they may be fortnightly or monthly depending on your circumstances and the type of therapy. Each session usually lasts 50-60 minutes.

## How long will the therapy take?

The length of therapy will depend on your needs and the type of therapy that you are entering into. This will be discussed and decided when you start therapy.

## Confidentiality

Meeting with your therapist is private and confidentiality is respected within NHS guidelines. However, we do communicate briefly, usually with the person who referred you, and let them know your general level of progress.

## Do you want to know more?

If you have further questions then you can either talk to the person who referred you or the contact person named on the enclosed letter.

## Your opinion matters

We welcome your views on the services we provide. If you would like to comment, make suggestions 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 917 7159.

If you are unable to resolve your concerns or would like to take the matter further, please write to:

Head of Critical Incidents and Complaints  
Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust  
Pinewood House  
Pinewood Place  
Dartford  
Kent  
DA2 7WG  
Tel: 01322 625751



# Psychological therapy services



What are they and how can I benefit?

## Introduction

This leaflet is for people who have been referred to the psychological therapy services provided by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. Hopefully it will answer some of your questions and enable you to make an informed choice about the suitability of psychological therapy. It will also give you an idea of what will happen now that you have been referred.

## What are psychological therapies?

Psychological therapies involve talking and listening. It is sometimes easier to talk to a stranger than relatives or friends. Therapists are trained to find out how your problems affect you and how you may be helped. They will work with you and encourage you to find your own solutions based on a clearer understanding of yourself and your current difficulties.

## What type of therapy?

There are different types of therapy. Your therapist will discuss with you which approach is most helpful to your particular situation. The most common are:

- **Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT)**  
CBT focuses on the 'here and now'. It aims to help you develop strategies to directly manage the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that are causing you difficulty.
- **Psychodynamic psychotherapy**  
Here the focus is on resolving conflicts arising from past experiences thereby improving current patterns of relating to others.
- **Art psychotherapy**  
Art psychotherapy is a form of psychodynamic therapy that can be used when things might be hard to put into words.
- **Family therapy**  
This approach may be used when a problem affects more than one person within a family.

Most therapy is one-to-one but group therapy may be more suitable on occasions. Qualified therapists can come from different training backgrounds including counselling, psychology, nursing, psychotherapy, art therapy, occupational therapy, social work and psychiatry.

## Can I benefit from psychological therapy?

Therapy can help people with a wide range of difficulties. There are different kinds of therapy which vary in their effectiveness depending on your precise situation and experiences. For this reason everyone is given an assessment prior to making a decision about whether therapy is the right choice for you.

You will be sent an appointment for an assessment for psychological therapies along with a form asking you for some basic information - this is designed to save time.

Therapy is more likely to be effective if you are willing to explore your feelings and change your thought patterns and

behaviours. You will benefit more if you are committed to the therapy, attend regularly and take an active role within the sessions.

## What happens during the assessment?

An assessment for therapy is an opportunity for you to talk and be listened to about your current situation, the difficulties you are encountering and how you think they may have arisen.

The assessment may take more than one appointment. You and your assessor work together to help build a picture of what has been happening and to try to understand your difficulties. Together you will discuss your needs and decide what is the best way to proceed.