

Is it confidential?

Appointments are private, but information is shared within the Pain Service, and your GP. If we do have a concern about risk of harm to yourself or others, the psychologist may need to share this with other relevant health professionals. We would always attempt to discuss this with you before sharing any information.

How do I make an appointment?

You will need to ask your GP to refer you to us. We will then meet you for an initial multidisciplinary meeting. Should we agree that you would benefit from psychology, we will then arrange for you to meet with one of our clinicians.

Is there an access to records?

The Freedom of Information Act (2000) gives the public the right to access/view all recorded non-personal public authority information upon request. Please approach any member of staff, should you wish to be supported with a written request.

Is there a comments or complaints procedure?

We always welcome verbal feedback in relation to our service, and ways we can improve. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is an organisation to contact, should you want to make a formal comment or complaint.

E-mail: pals@bartshealth.nhs.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service

If you need general information or advice about Trust services, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) by visiting www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/pals. Alternatively please contact staff who are providing your care if you require clinical advice.

Large print and other languages

For this leaflet in large print, please speak to your clinical team.

For help interpreting this leaflet in other languages, please ring 020 8223 8934.

Tell us what you think

Tweet us **@NHSBartsHealth**

Talk to us via **www.facebook.com/bartshealth**

Leave feedback on NHS Choices **www.nhs.uk**

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All our patient information leaflets are reviewed every three years.

Patient information

Could talking to our Specialist Pain Psychologist help you?

Persistent Pain Service
0207 377 7872.



What is a Psychologist?

Psychologists are trained to help people from all walks of life. We typically train for a minimum of six years, and we have skills in assessing, understanding and assisting people who are experiencing difficulties.

Psychologists use “Talking Therapies” such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Mindfulness-Based-Approaches and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT).

Psychologists are bound by the British Psychological Society (BPS) professional code of conduct.

Why is there a Psychologist in the Persistent Pain Team?

Physical pain and emotional wellbeing are closely linked. A change in one area can affect the other.

We know that people living with persistent pain (and their families) often have additional emotional stressors due to the demands of managing their condition.

Going to see a psychologist does not mean you are “mad”. Talking to a psychologist can help you understand what is going on in your life and find new ways of coping.

A Specialist Pain Psychologist can help with:

- Learning to manage and getting used to having a long term condition, such as chronic pain.
- This might mean having help with emotions such as feeling overwhelmed, sad, frightened and angry.
- Feeling suicidal
- Some people find that they feel depressed or anxious in relation to their pain.
- Help with making a self-management plan, which includes thinking about flare ups of pain.
- Worries about health and the future
- Worries about medical treatments, such as injections
- Concerns about the way pain impacts on relationships and sexual intimacy
- We also help with areas including lack of sleep, pacing activities, pain education and anxiety education.
- We can offer psychology alongside other disciplines within the pain team. And we give patients a co-ordinated approach.

We are here to talk about your main concerns, whatever they are.

The number of sessions required is usually between three and twelve.

What happens when you see a Specialist Pain Psychologist?

The team may agree with you to meet one of our Psychologists. These clinicians can be helpful in looking at ways to assist you to manage the impact that pain has on your life. This usually involves a discussion about how you understand the pain and how you feel about it.

Trying different ways of seeing things and different ways of doing things can help you when you cannot see a way forward. Psychologists may also identify other stresses that are adding to your pain and may need to be looked at.

We can provide Advocates to interpret in your language.

The Advocates are bound by confidentiality, so they won't tell your business to anyone else. If you know your Advocate personally, then please let us know and we will arrange someone else.

At the Persistent Pain Team here at Mile End Hospital you will be offered an initial appointment to discuss how things are for you.

After the initial meeting you may decide to use another service, or that you do not wish to continue to meet. If you do decide to continue, the psychologist will make a joint plan with you and will agree the number of sessions and agreed goals.