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## Function first!

Improving symptoms by exploring the link  
between the mind and body



## Why have I been referred to Function First?

Your doctor referred you to us so you could get help with your physical symptoms that are complex and persistent and / or are worse or different from those usually expected with your diagnosis.



These types of symptoms are quite common. They can sometimes improve quickly or may be longer-lasting. They can be different for each person and may include headaches, feeling sick, muscle weakness, collapsing and long-term pain (often called chronic or persistent pain).

The doctor referring you has carefully considered your symptoms. They will have talked with you about how our team might help you.

**Please note the Function First Service is currently commissioned for children and young people up to the age of 18 living in Brighton and Hove only.**

## What do we do?

Our team focuses on the close link between the mind and the body, and we aim to help you understand how they can affect each other as part of our treatment approach. We look at why you may be getting your symptoms and the different factors that may affect them.



## What will happen at my first appointment?

At the first appointment you will meet with two or more members of the team to talk through your symptoms and what difficulties they are causing you.

We will ask how your symptoms affect your daily life including at home and at school, and about any impact on your family. We'll also ask about your interests and hopes for the future.

It is also an opportunity for you to ask any questions or talk about anything else that may be worrying you.

Please remember to bring or wear comfortable clothing as we will usually need to do a physical assessment.



## We are here to help you to

- improve your ability to participate in everyday activities
- get back to doing the things you love
- help you recover from your symptoms or manage them better.



## How do we do this?

- provide education and information about different aspects of health and wellbeing
- help you identify meaningful goals
- offer personalised therapies and treatments
- work with you to develop strategies that are right for you.

We know that understanding the different aspects of your symptoms and a gradual rehabilitation approach can help young people get back on track.

## What will happen next?

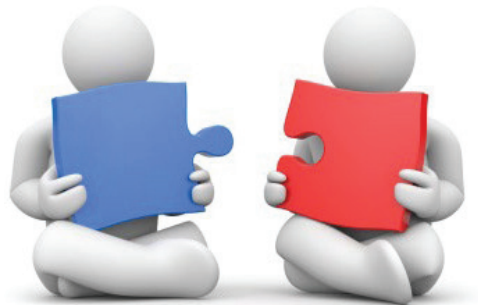
Sometimes you may need to have further assessment with individual therapists. Together, we will agree a treatment plan and discuss your possible goals.

We will decide which therapists from the team would meet your needs best. Our psychologists can support you with your worries or mood, the physiotherapists can help you to gradually build up your strength and exercise tolerance, and the occupational therapist can discuss strategies to help you participate in your daily activities.

As an integrated team, there will be some overlap in roles, and sometimes we may see you jointly. It is often useful for us to involve your school and see how they can help too.

We usually meet back up with you as a team after six months to review how things are going.

Whatever the plan, we'll be working together with you, so you can start to get back to doing more of the things you enjoy!



## When will I stop seeing the team?

- If you are managing your symptoms well or if they have reduced enough that you no longer need our support
- If you are not finding our approach helpful or if another service could better meet your needs
- When you are 18. Depending on your symptoms, you may be referred on to adult services if this is right for you. This will be discussed with you nearer the time.



## Notes and questions:

As you are reading this leaflet, you may find it helpful to make some notes of things you want to discuss or that you want to remember to tell us about at your first appointment, such as a list of medicines you use, or things that are particularly bothering you.



# Team members

<b>Dr Ruth Kendall</b>	<b>Senior Clinical Psychologist</b>
<b>Dr Emma Adams</b>	<b>Clinical Psychologist</b>
<b>Helen Salter</b>	<b>Senior Physiotherapist</b>
<b>Johanna Lord</b>	<b>Senior Physiotherapist</b>
<b>Julia Krikman</b>	<b>Senior Occupational Therapist</b>
<b>Dr Jonathan Rabbs</b>	<b>Consultant Paediatrician</b>
<b>Lenka Haluskova</b>	<b>Service Administrator</b>

## Contact details

### Function First!

#### The Paediatric Complex Symptoms Team

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