



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Having a neuropsychological assessment (brain check)

Neuropsychology

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about having a neuropsychological assessment, also called a brain check. It tells you what to expect before, during and after your appointment.

The assessment will help neuropsychologists (doctors who specialise in the brain) to understand how your brain works, and what they can do to support you with your symptoms.

Why do I need this assessment?

Several things can affect brain function. You may have had a head injury, a stroke, a viral infection, a tumour, epilepsy, or some other illness or condition. Everyday stress, poor sleep, and mood difficulties, amongst other things, can also affect the way your brain processes information.

A neuropsychological assessment will help to see whether there are any changes to how your brain is working and what these changes may mean for you.

How will this assessment help?

Having this assessment will help to:

- Better understand your symptoms.
- Decide what treatment or rehabilitation is appropriate.
- Track any changes in your symptoms.

Who will do the assessment?

A clinical neuropsychologist or their support staff will do the check-up.

Neuropsychologists have knowledge of how the brain works and how brain injuries or illness may affect your behaviour, thinking and personality.

What will the assessment involve?

We will look at several different brain functions including:

- Concentration.
- Memory.
- Problem-solving.

Some of the tasks are pen and paper exercises and others involve solving puzzles. We will decide which tasks to give you based on your history, medical notes and discussion with others involved in your care.

You may feel that some of the tasks are not very relevant to your current difficulties. But each has been specially chosen to help us build a complete picture of your strengths and weaknesses.

Are there any risks or discomforts?

Neuropsychological assessments do not need any physical examination, injections, or drugs. Some people may experience tiredness or fatigue afterwards.

How long will it take?

About two to three hours. Some sessions may be shorter or longer than this. There will be breaks if you need them.

How should I prepare for the assessments?

You should avoid any activities that are likely to leave you especially tired on the day of your appointment.

There is no need to stop taking any prescribed medication, but you should avoid alcohol or recreational drugs in the 24 hours before your appointment. If you wear reading glasses or use hearing aids, remember to bring them with you.

Sometimes it is helpful to come with someone who knows you well so we can briefly speak to them and gather more background information. It is up to you whether you want to bring someone with you.

What happens after the assessment?

A report will be sent to you, your GP and the referring doctor or treatment team.

We hope to be able to provide you with some tips and strategies to help you manage your symptoms better. We may also make recommendations for further investigations or treatment.

What happens if I can not make the appointment?

If you no longer want the appointment or need to reschedule, please phone the number in your clinic letter. If you would like an appointment but cannot travel, please let us know as we may be able to organise a virtual (online) appointment.

Who can I contact if I need further information or advice?

The Neuropsychology Department

Louisa Martindale Building, Royal Sussex County Hospital
Eastern Road, Brighton, BN2 5BE

Email uhsussex.lead.neuropsychologist@nhs.net

Phone **01444 441881 Ext. 65739**

If you have any comments about our service, please bring them to the attention of: General Manager, Neurology, Stroke and Neurorehabilitation at the above address.

Please have a look on the NHS website, www.nhs.uk, for more information about neurological conditions.

This information is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove or Haywards Heath.

Ref. number: 2460

Publication date: 12/2024

Review date: 12/2027

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