

What is a Primary Mental Health Worker?

For Families and Carers

What is a primary mental health worker?

Primary mental health workers are professionals from a variety of backgrounds who are trained and experienced in working within the community to promote positive mental health and well being. These professionals link with community settings like schools and children's centres and can give advice and support at an early stage when difficulties first arise.

Primary mental health workers are professionals with a background in health and social care who specialise in working with young people's emotional and mental health.

How can we help?

Primary mental health workers can be asked to become involved with young people up to the age of 18 years by any professional, for example the public health school nurse, a teacher, a doctor, a social worker, who will make a written referral to the CAMHS service.

Under 16

If your child is under 16 years of age, the referrer would contact us after first discussing this with you and gaining your permission to make a CAMHS referral.

16 – 18 years

Where a young person is over 16 years they can access the service without parental consent. However, we would always seek parental involvement where possible.

Confidentiality

You and your child have a right to confidentiality; anything you talk about will not be shared without your permission unless we become concerned that you, your child or someone else is being harmed or at risk of being harmed in some way and in need of protection.

What does the primary mental health worker do?

We are involved with children and young people where concerns have been raised about their mental health. Some of these problems can include worries and stresses about going to school, making friends, or where there has been a change in the family circumstances.

Appointments

Appointments are usually arranged at a clinic base. However, we may suggest meeting you and your child with a professional you already see in a mutually convenient place, such as your home or your child's school.

We may ask for your consent to contact other professionals or services who already know your child, for example their school, for information.

It is trust policy to discharge patients who do not attend a first appointment and who have not notified the department. However appointments can be rescheduled when necessary by contacting the department.

Appointments are currently offered Monday to Friday 9-5pm and will usually last up to an hour.

What usually happens at the first appointment?

We can talk with you and your child about any worries, difficulties and concerns you and your family have and about how you and your child are feeling.

We may ask you about the family and how things have been in the past. This is a way of trying to make sense of what is happening and also a way of finding out what might help.

We hope that by having a discussion ways can be found for everyone involved to work out what to do and build on what may be going well.

Together we can plan what support your child and your family need. We may continue to support you and your child alongside other professionals who are working with you.

Following a first appointment we may agree to arrange a follow up appointment to review whether things are improving or we may agree no further appointment is necessary.

Where some problems might need more assessment and take longer to improve we will ask our colleagues in the specialist CAMHS team to provide further specialist assessment and support for your child.

Who do I contact if I need to change my appointment?

If you cannot attend for your appointment please let us know:

North Tyneside Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service
Primary Mental Health Worker Team
Albion Road Resource Centre, Albion Road, North Shields
NE29 0HG

Telephone 0191 2196700
Monday – Friday 9-5pm.

Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

Other sources of information

NHS 111

NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) www.nice.org.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Freephone: **0800 032 0202** Text: 01670 511098

Email: northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111** www.northumbria.nhs.uk

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