

Information about having a Cognitive Assessment

**Clinical Neuropsychology Outpatient Service
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh**

What is a cognitive assessment?

Cognitive abilities include concentration, memory, judgement, and planning and organising. It can be helpful to know whether or not these abilities have been affected by brain injury, stroke, or neurological illness.

You have been given this leaflet because your clinician thinks it may be helpful to undertake an assessment of your cognitive abilities. This leaflet explains what a cognitive assessment involves. This will help you decide whether to have this type of assessment.

What is involved?

A cognitive assessment involves answering questions and doing some paper and pencil tests. The assessment is carried out with the clinician who explains what to do.

For example, to assess concentration you may be asked to listen to a tape recording and count different types of sounds. To assess memory you may be shown pictures of different objects and later asked to point out pictures you have seen before.

Some assessments you may find easy, others more difficult. Often people find the tasks interesting, and the information gathered helps you to understand your strengths and weaknesses.

If you normally wear glasses for reading or use a hearing aid, please bring them along.

How might an assessment be helpful?

A cognitive assessment can:

- Help identify your cognitive strengths and weaknesses.
- Help you to understand how your brain injury, stroke, or neurological illness affects you.
- Suggest ways to work around weaknesses in day-to-day life and build on your strengths.
- Measure change by repeating assessments at a later date if required.

Are there any downsides?

Sometimes people can feel anxious that a cognitive assessment may show up problems. Weaknesses identified may be affecting your ability to undertake day-to-day tasks or employment. Your clinician can discuss with you the pros and cons of doing the assessment.

How long will it take?

Most appointments last between 45 to 90 minutes. Shorter appointments or rest breaks can be arranged if you get tired easily. Your clinician will discuss with you how many appointments will be needed to complete the assessment. Usually between one to three appointments are needed.

What happens after the assessment?

The results will be discussed with you. They can also be discussed with a family member too, if you wish. A written report is sent to you, the person who referred you, and to your GP. It may be helpful to share the information with other people involved in your care.

Complaints and Compliments

If you are pleased or unhappy with our service, or have any comments to make, please talk to our staff – we welcome your feedback.

If you wish to make a formal complaint please contact the NHS Lothian Complaints Team, which is based at:

Waverley Gate
2 – 4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3EG

Telephone: 0131 536 3370

Email: craft@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Contacting us

If you wish to comment on this leaflet, require a large print version or have any questions about your appointment or the neuropsychology service then please contact:

Neuropsychology
RHCYP and DCN
2nd Floor Clinical Management Office
Edinburgh Bio Quarter
Edinburgh
EH16 4TJ

Telephone: 0131 312 0649

Email: DCN.neuropsychology@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

For more information please visit our website:

<https://services.nhslothian.scot/neuropsychology/>

