Persistent Physical Symptoms Service (PPSS)
Chronic Pain, CFS, FND, MUS
Information for professionals

Working across Cumbria with patients and professionals to increase the understanding and confidence in management of long-term physical symptoms

The Persistent Physical Symptoms Service offers an integrated pathway for all patients with persistent symptoms in North, East and West Cumbria. The roll-out of the service will be staged, with training offered from early 2016 and referrals accepted from April 2016.

Who is the Persistent Physical Symptoms Service (PPSS) for?
The service offers evidence-based interventions to patients with persistent symptoms (of more than six months duration) rather than due to any underlying pathology.

This includes
- Chronic Pain
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS)/ Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME)
- Functional Neurological Disorders (FND, including non-epileptic attack disorder)
- Medically Unexplained Symptoms (MUS)

The Persistent Physical Symptoms Service offers:
- A single point of access
- Joint assessment with a Clinical Psychologist and Physiotherapist
- Symptom management groups
- Individual psychological therapy-including CBT
- Individual Physiotherapy
- Training for health professionals on managing persistent physical symptoms
Following assessment

Following assessment, patients are matched to the most appropriate level (or levels) of intervention, based on their individual needs.

The primary model adopted is cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), supported by additional evidence-based approaches such as acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) and eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR) for trauma. Treatment choice is based on individual assessment and formulation.

A biopsychosocial model is followed throughout the service, recognising the complex interactions between physical, psychological and environmental factors that predispose, precipitate and maintain an individual's symptoms.

Training for health professionals on managing persistent symptoms

We recognise that the management of persistent symptoms begins and ends in primary care, with many patients not requiring onward referral. Our training package will aim to support primary care clinicians to:

- Identify individuals with persistent symptoms
- Explore, and explain Persistent Physical Symptoms alongside their patients
- Engage and encourage self-management
- Share decision making around appropriate tests, interventions and onward referral

Please note: The training has been funded as part of the role-out of the PPSS because of the recognised importance of the management of PPS within Primary Care. Please contact us to book onto planned training sessions or you may prefer to invite us to attend your Practice to provide bespoke training.

Referral Criteria

- 18 years or older
- Persistent (> 6 months) physical symptoms related to disorders of biopsychosocial function rather than any obvious pathology
- Diagnoses of CFS/ME, Chronic Pain, FND and MUS.
- Symptoms cannot be managed within primary care.
- Relevant investigations/tests have been completed.
- Not awaiting further medical or surgical opinion in relation to symptoms.
- An explanation of persistent symptoms has been shared with the patient by relevant medical professional (e.g. GP or Consultant).

Comorbid mental health problems should be referred to First Steps or CMHT (with the exception of anxiety or depression secondary to the PPS).
The Health Psychology Team offer a **consultation hour** on weekday afternoons 1:30pm-2:30pm. Health professionals can pre-book a “call back” to discuss specific referrals. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of a referral to the PPSS, please use this option. **To access the consultation hour** please call 01946 523653, or e-mail PhysicalHealth.Psychology@cumbria.nhs.uk (providing your full contact details).

**How to refer to the PPSS**

Please complete the PPSS referral form and email to the “single point of access” email address: **PPSS@cumbria.nhs.uk**

**Contact details for further information**

- **PPSS Team Administrator**: 
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- **Business and Admin Support**: 
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- **Clinical Lead**: Dr Lizzie Davey, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
  
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- **Quality and Physiotherapy Lead**: Joanna Manley
  
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