

South Cumbria CFS/ME Service

Psychological support for people living with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS)



Happier | Healthier | Hopeful

People with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) sometimes fear that people will not believe their symptoms are real. In this service, we believe CFS is a real illness. We offer psychological support to help you manage your illness day-to-day.

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) causes persistent exhaustion that affects everyday life and doesn't go away with sleep or rest. CFS is also known as **ME**, which stands for myalgic encephalomyelitis. You can find out more about CFS/ME on **NHS Choices** www.nhs.uk/conditions/Chronic-fatigue-syndrome

How do I access the service?

Your GP can refer you to the CFS/ME service if they think you are suitable.

What we do

Assess: Before you attend your clinic assessment we will send you some questionnaires. Your answers help us to:

- understand the impact of CFS/ME on your life
- ensure that your symptoms improve during your treatment.

When you come to the clinic you will see two health professionals – a practitioner psychologist and a physiotherapist. We will discuss:

- your previous history of difficulties
- your current goals for treatment
- the possible treatment options that are best matched to your needs.

Plan: If you and we agree that the CFS/ME service is appropriate for your needs, we will offer you a combination of two evidence-based treatments:

- Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT)
- Graded exercise treatment (GET)

We treat most patients in groups tailored to your needs. Our patients tell us they find group work beneficial and supportive. They learn from talking to their fellow group members. The health professionals running the group will offer their expertise to help you manage your condition and reduce the negative impact on your life.



If we decide together at the assessment that working in a group does not suit you, we will talk about other options with you.

Treatments

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)

Cognitive behaviour therapy examines how your thoughts, behaviour and CFS/ME symptoms relate to one another. Your CBT therapist will help you to understand your illness and change the way you manage it. Between sessions you try out new ways of managing your CFS/ME. The aim of this therapy is to help you manage your symptoms more effectively and do more.

Graded exercise therapy (GET)

Usually, you see a physiotherapist who helps you work out a basic activity routine. Together you plan to gradually increase the amount of physical activity or exercise you do. The gradual increase takes into account your symptoms, fitness, and current activity levels. The aim of this therapy is to help you do more and feel better.

Contact us

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Confidentiality

'The Trust's vision is to keep your information safe in our hands.'

We promise to use your information fairly and legally, and in-line with local and national policies. You have a right to understand how your information is used and you can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

For further information contact the Information Governance Team on 01228 608998 or email Information.Governance@cumbria.nhs.uk

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback, which helps us to improve our services. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints to make about your care, please contact the Patient Experience Team.

Email: PET@cumbria.nhs.uk Tel: 01228 602128 Freephone: 0800 633 5547

If you would like this factsheet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio, please call:

01228 603890

E: communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk

Or write to Engagement and Communications
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