



Memory Service

Mental Health Services for Older People

The Memory Service is a free specialist diagnostic, support and treatment service for people experiencing complex and unexplained changes in their cognition such as memory. We are a multi-disciplinary team including Consultant Psychogeriatricians, Community Mental Health Nurse, Clinical Psychologists, Social Worker and Occupational Therapists.

For many people, the experience of being referred to this service may be very daunting and/or stressful. We acknowledge this aspect, and aim to support and guide the client and family through the process, respecting unique needs and circumstances.

What does our service offer?

- Expert clinical diagnosis
- A thorough and sensitive assessment
- Information on appropriate treatment options
- Post diagnosis education, support and future planning advice
- Links for clients or their family to other service providers and community supports
- Our approach is flexible and tailored to the suit the needs of the client and their situation. The team spends time networking and building rapport as this has a significant impact on client journey and outcomes
- We strive to be responsive to the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, using interpreters when appropriate
- Clients that identify as Maori will be referred to Te Puna Oranga for cultural support/assessment

Entry Criteria:

Memory Service – Referral Guideline

Prompt and precise client information enables timely referral triage.

There is an expectation that the Map of Medicine Midland Regional Dementia Pathway will have been used prior to referral to specialist services.

If you are not a primary health service we would recommend that you liaise directly with the client's GP before pursuing a referral to our service. This is to clarify that a client does not have a pre-existing diagnosis of dementia.

1. People with a primary complaint of objective/observed non-rapid progressive cognitive impairment, unexplained by a pre-existing medical, surgical or psychiatric condition, with a complexity that requires Specialist assessment. i.e.

- a) A multi-disciplinary approach to assessment is needed.

AND/OR

- b) The person meets at least one of the following 'Red flag' criteria on the Midland Regional Dementia Pathway.

- a. Less than 65 years old
- b. History of head injury now presenting with progressive cognitive impairment
- c. Culture and/or language is a barrier to assessment by Primary Care.
- d. Major Psychiatric disorder. (An assessment by Mental Health Services may be requested prior to acceptance of the referral.)
- e. Major Personality change
- f. Atypical cognitive decline
- g. Strong family history of neurodegenerative disorder

Exclusion Criteria:

- 1. People with a confirmed intellectual disability: Refer to the Intellectual Disability Dual Disorder Service (IDDDS).
- 2. People currently abusing alcohol or drugs without commitment to change.
- 3. A referral to Neurology may be more appropriate for
 - a) Younger people
 - AND/OR
 - b) Where there are new or unexplained neurological symptoms e.g. abnormal gait and/or movement disorder.

Notes:

- 1. People need to be able to participate in the assessment.
- 2. 'Cognitive impairment' refers to deficits in at least one of the following: memory, language, new learning, praxis, visuospatial skills and/or executive function e.g. judgement/decision making.
- 3. 'Objective cognitive impairment' must be demonstrated by using one of the standard cognitive assessment tools listed in the Midland Regional Dementia Pathway. The Memory service suggests using the Montreal Cognitive Assessment. 'Observed cognitive impairment' refers to an informant history of cognitive impairment e.g. from family members.

What to expect from the Memory Service?

- All referrals are triaged by the Memory Service team on a weekly basis
- A client needs to agree to participate with the service
- On acceptance of a referral:
 - 1) a referral maybe made for a CT brain scan

- 2) a member of the team will arrange with the client and/or whanau an appointment for an initial assessment at home
- Following this further assessments maybe indicated such as Neuropsychological assessment, Social Work assessment or Occupational assessment
 - Finally a clinic appointment will be scheduled with a Consultant Psychiatrist to provide an outcome and an agreed plan with the patient and family assessments
 - Post clinic interventions may involve:
 - Supporting clients and their family/whanau to make sense of their diagnosis
 - Prescribing and monitoring medications
 - Further assessments
 - Psychological interventions
 - Psychosocial and functional support
 - Community referrals
 - Support to access services
 - Driving assessments
 - Our team is unable to offer crisis support or long-term support for significant mental health issues.
 - If your referral is declined you will receive a letter outlining why. Depending on the nature of the referral the team may offer recommendations or forward the referral to a more appropriate service.

Where are we located?

The Memory Service is a separate entity funded by Mental Health Services for Older People. We are often confused with OPR Memory Clinic, but this service is separate (although located in the same building).

Address:

214, Pembroke Street

Level B1, Older Persons and Rehabilitation building,

Waikato Hospital,

Phone: 07-839 8603

Fax: 07-839-8737

We welcome enquiries regarding potential referrals or service related questions. If you are interested the team is available to present on our service at your work place.