



Information for people accessing Hertfordshire's Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service



Who are we?

Our Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service (EMDASS) is a team of professionals who specialise in cognitive disorders (ie Dementia), which include memory problems.

Why am I coming to the Early Memory Diagnosis and Support Service (EMDASS)

You have been referred to our service because you, or somebody close to you (for example your relatives or doctor) have noticed that your memory might not be as good as it used to be.

They may have noticed other things as well, for example finding that things that you used to do have become more difficult for you, things like cooking, cleaning or even washing and getting dressed.

The person making the referral to EMDASS will usually be your GP, who will have looked into your physical health and screened for other causes. They will have completed blood tests and other screening tools with you. They will ask us to try to understand the cause of the changes with you.

It is important to recognise that there may be many causes for the changes that have been identified; these could be related to an infection, depression or dementia.

Your first appointment

We would encourage you to bring a relative or a person who knows you well, who can support you during your assessment.

Things to bring to your appointment (if applicable):

- A list of prescribed and non-prescribed medications
- Your spectacles
- Your hearing aids
- Your My Plan, Red Folder or Purple Folder if you have one of these

Your appointment will be in one of our clinic settings, where you will be welcomed by a member of our reception staff. If your GP has advised us, in the referral, that you have mobility difficulties, you may be offered an appointment with our nurse at your home

All of our staff are professionals who have chosen to specialise in the care of people that have cognitive disorders including a memory problem.

You will usually be seen by a Nurse and Consultant Psychiatrist at your first appointment (though sometimes it may be one of them or another professional).

They will discuss many things with you, for example your current situation and challenges, your past and how you have lived your life, your physical health and social circumstances. They will also complete some tests with you that are like questionnaires. There will also be a questionnaire for the person who accompanies you to complete.

The appointment should last for around one and a half hours. At the end of the appointment, the professional will explain to you, in a clear way that you can understand, what they feel the cause of your challenges are and what will happen next.

What happens next?

This will depend on the outcome of your appointment.

- If we feel that there isn't a problem, then we would discharge you back to the care of your GP. They may review you again after a period of time and ask us to see you again if your challenges have continued.
- You might be invited to our Mild Cognitive Impairment Group for people with mild cognitive difficulties.
- If we feel that more assessment is required, you might be invited to an appointment with our Psychologist or Occupational Therapist. Alternatively, we may ask a Neurologist or Geriatrician from the local hospital to see you. We would then see you again to review your assessments and explain to you what happens next.
- If we have made a diagnosis of a dementia and explained it to you, we will then arrange for you to be followed up by our Post Diagnostic Support Team.

Frequently asked questions

What happens at my appointment?

You will meet a doctor or nurse who will ask you questions about your memory concerns. They will ask you to complete a memory test and they may ask our Occupational Therapist and/or our Psychologist to see you for further assessments.

Is there any treatment?

Medication which aims at slowing down the progression of the symptoms can be prescribed for certain types of dementia.

Are there any tests which need to be done?

We need your GP to organise most recent blood tests and an ECG. This is to help identify any physical causes for your memory problem. We will offer you an assessment which lasts for up to one and half hours and where needed, we will request a head scan from the local general hospitals in our county.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, we ask you to attend the appointment with a relative, or friend who knows you well.

What happens if I get a diagnosis of dementia?

Depending on the type of dementia, we will discuss a treatment and support plan with you and your relative/friend if necessary. You will also be offered an appointment to see one of the team members for advice, support and offer future guidance. We will then inform your GP of the assessment results.

Useful contacts and support organisations

- **Mental Health Help Line**
Tel: 01438 843322
(between 19.00 - 08.00)
- **Herts Help** – Local advice information and support to make life easier, including advocacy support.
Tel: 0300 123 4044
Email: info@hertshelp.net
- **Age UK** – Charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life.
Tel: 0800 169 2081
Website: www.ageuk.org.uk
- **Alzheimer's Society** – Charity for support of people with memory concerns and their carers.
Tel: 0300 222 1122
Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk
- **Carers in Herts** – Support and information for family and friends who look after someone.
Tel: 01992 586969
Website: www.carersinherts.org.uk
- **Health & Social Care** – Local authority assessment of care needs ie; home carers, day care, equipment, etc
Tel: 0300 123 4042 / 4043
- **MIND** – Charity providing advice, information and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem.
Tel: 0300 123 3393
Website: www.mind.org.uk
- **SANE** – Charity working to improve the quality of life for anyone affected by mental illness.
Tel: 0300 304 7000
(SANEline 4.30pm – 10.30pm daily)
Website: www.sane.org.uk
- **Change Grow Live (CGL)** – Hertfordshire's Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service for adults (their friends, families and carers) who would like support for their drug or alcohol misuse.
Tel: 0800 652 3169
Website: www.cri.org.uk
- **The Samaritans** – Charity providing confidential emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair
116 123 (Freephone, 24 hours, 365 days a year)
- **Hertfordshire Stop Smoking Services** – Service that offers professional specialist advice and support to smokers
Tel: 0800 389 3998
or 01442 453071
Text: SMOKEFREE to 80818
E-mail: stopsmokingservice@hertscgcsx.gov.uk

Non-emergency support

Please contact the team who will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Your appointment letter will detail the clinic you are attending.

Clinic	Contact No.
Colne House	01923 837154
Marlowes	01442 275628
Saffron Ground	01438 792120
Rosanne House	01707 364012
Seward Lodge	01707 364012

If you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation, call NHS service 111.

Emergency Support

For advice and telephone support from a mental health professional out of hours, call 01438 843322 Mental Health Helpline (call between 5pm – 9am and 24 hours on weekends and Bank holidays).

In an emergency, please call 999 or make use of your local A & E service.

Cover Artwork: *Autumn Mountains* by Denise Bowser

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