

# What is CAMHS?

## Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

### What do CAMHS do?

Mental health difficulties can show up in a variety of ways, and it is common to feel stressed, down or angry from time to time. Sometimes these feelings can be overwhelming and just won't go away, which is why you have been referred to our service. We can help.

We support young people experiencing significant difficulties with their mental health. We work closely with them and their families to help understand what the problems are and how to help reduce the negative impact these difficulties have on their lives. We work closely with other services including schools, local authorities and GP surgeries to support you with your mental health.

### Why have you been referred to CAMHS?

Reasons that you may be referred to CAMHS include:

- Feeling very low a lot of the time
- Getting very worried about people, places, situations or/and objects
- Difficulties managing behaviours
- Issues with understanding
- Being very preoccupied by certain things or thoughts
- Self-harm and/or suicidal ideas, thoughts and/or behaviours

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If you are concerned about the difficulties you are facing, it can be helpful to talk to someone about them. If you are experiencing significant difficulties, your GP or teacher are best placed to make a referral to CAMHS for you. They'll send us a short summary of your difficulties so we can explore this with you further.

## What happens during your assessment?

Following your referral, you may have an appointment or phone call with a clinician from our CYPF Hub, or another one of our CAMHS teams. This will involve the clinician asking you questions to understand the difficulties you are experiencing.

After your initial assessment, if we agree that we are the right service to meet your needs, we will discuss with you which of our teams will be able to help you best, or whether there is another service that would help you better. The clinician will then work together with you to decide on a suitable plan.

## Waiting times

Unfortunately, we have a very large number of young people referred to CAMHS therefore we must make sure that those in the most need receive our help as quickly as possible. This means that some young people may have to wait a little longer to get the support from us that they need. We will let you know how long you may wait for an appointment after we have made your initial assessment.

## Carer involvement

We encourage you to involve parents and carers in your work with us, so they can support and help you with your treatment plan. If you do not wish to involve certain people, we will do our best to respect your wishes. Part of the treatment usually involves you being seen alone. These sessions are confidential. We will only share information with parents or carers if you agree to it, unless we believe there is a significant risk to you or others.

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## Medication

Sometimes medication may be discussed with you if we think it may help manage your difficulties. This may be offered alongside talking therapy. By talking with you and others who know you well, we may identify additional difficulties you may be experiencing, and will be able to explore these further.

## Additional support: our Patient Advice and Liaison service (PALs)

PALs offers free informal advice, information and support. We can help you sort out any concerns or queries you may have about the care we provide. While we do not offer medical advice or counselling, we can talk about treatments with you, listen to your views, put you in touch with other agencies, and help you give a compliment or make a complaint.

Contact PALs on 0118 904 3467 or [pals@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@berkshire.nhs.uk)  
We are open 9.30am-4.30pm Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays), please leave a message outside of these hours and we will get back to you ASAP.

## Additional help and support

While waiting to hear from us you may find these websites helpful and supportive:

- Royal College of Psychiatry: [www.rcpsych.ac.uk](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)
- Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Support Hope and Recovery Online Network: [www.sharon.nhs.uk](http://www.sharon.nhs.uk)
- Eating disorders: [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk)
- Anxiety support: [www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)
- Self-harm: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- Reach OUT support for LGBT young people:  
[www.reachout@reading.gov.uk](mailto:www.reachout@reading.gov.uk)
- ADDIS ADHA support: [www.addiss.co.uk](http://www.addiss.co.uk)
- Youth Access: [www.youthaccess.org.uk](http://www.youthaccess.org.uk)

## How to contact us

### Our clinics

- **Bracknell and Wokingham:** Community Hospital, 41 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG41 2RE. Phone: 0118 904 6770
- **Slough, Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead:** Upton Hospital, Fir Tree House, Albert Street, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 2BJ. Phone: 01753 635645/46
- **Reading:** Erleigh House, University of Reading, Early Gate, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 6BZ. Phone: 0118 904 6780
- **West Berkshire (Thatcham):** Lower Henwick Farmhouse, Turnpike Road, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 3AP. Phone: 0118 904 6790

### If you have questions about your referral or concerns that your difficulties are getting worse, call us:

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| • Bracknell and Wokingham               | 0118 904 6770 |
| • Slough, Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead | 0300 365 0123 |
| • Reading                               | 0118 904 6780 |
| • West Berkshire (Thatcham)             | 0118 904 6790 |

### What if it is an emergency?

If you need urgent support for your mental health between the hours of 8.00am-8.00pm Monday to Friday please call us on 0300 365 1234.

- If you need urgent help outside of these hours please call NHS 111
- Please only call 999 or go to A&E if it is a life-threatening medical emergency and your child needs immediate medical care.

### For general concerns about your referral you can contact our CYPF Hub:

Phone: **0300 365 1234**

Email: **[integratedhub@berkshire.nhs.uk](mailto:integratedhub@berkshire.nhs.uk)**

**[www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/CAMHS](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/CAMHS)**