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# Behaviour Support Service

covering **Sunderland and South Tyneside**  
Information for families

Shining a light on the future





## What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website [www.ntw.nhs.uk](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk) (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- We are always looking at ways to improve services. Your feedback allows us to monitor the quality of our services and act upon issues that you bring to our attention.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

- the quickest way for you to do this is to complete our short online survey at [www.ntw.nhs.uk/poy](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/poy)
- complete a Points of You survey, available from staff.

## Advocacy information

- Sunderland Tel: 0191 510 5051
- South Tyneside Tel: 0191 427 1500

## Contact information

South of Tyne (Sunderland and South Tyneside)  
Tel: 0303 123 1145

The service can be contacted between between 9 am – 5 pm.

## The team

The team covers Sunderland and South Tyneside.

At the beginning of your involvement with the service you will be contacted by the person who will be working with your relative. This may be a nurse, an occupational therapist or a psychologist who will provide you with a contact number.

The team supports people whose behaviour has been affected primarily by dementia but also other conditions such as depression or anxiety. The average length of involvement will be about three months.

## Challenging behaviour and dementia

One of the most distressing aspects of dementia is that for some people it can result in behaviours that others find upsetting and stressful. Behaviours that staff, relatives and other residents find stressful may include

- verbal abuse
- wandering
- aggression
- eating problems
- continence difficulties and difficulties associated with personal care needs.

## What does the Behaviour Support Service do?

The team aim to do the following:

- Achieve a greater understanding of your relative's behaviour i.e. try to establish why they are behaving (as they are).
- Develop a care plan aimed at reducing the difficulties, as it may not be possible to eliminate the difficulties entirely.
- Enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of your relative and others in the care home environment, such as other residents and staff.
- Attempt to treat the behaviour without the use of medication where possible by adopting alternative interventions.
- However, clearly there are occasions when medication is clinically appropriate such as treatment of pain, low mood, psychosis etc. Any drugs prescribed will be in line with best practice. The care home staff will inform you if there are medication changes.

## How the team works with the care home

During assessment, the team will collect information about your relative from a variety of sources including yourself.

We aim to develop an understanding of the person's needs and behaviour through gathering information on:

- The person's life experiences
- Their personality
- Their mental and physical health

The team member will then assist care staff and family members to also understand the person's needs and develop a care plan to better manage behaviours that are considered challenging.

For example; shouting may indicate pain, or aggression during personal care interventions may be explained by an inability to understand what is being communicated.

## Your involvement

You will be asked to provide information on your relative's life history including likes, dislikes, personality, home environment etc. This background information is invaluable in developing appropriate interventions, tailored specifically to your relative's individual needs.

If you are happy to be involved, you may also be asked to assist in putting the new care plan in place, for example you may be asked to provide a family photo album or make a reassuring voice recording.

The team will meet you and your family to discuss our role in greater detail and will explain where and why we may need your support. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have by contacting the allocated team member.

## Confidentiality

We have a duty to ensure that all information is confidential. We will ensure that it is only shared with others who are involved in providing care for your relative such as GP and care staff.