

# Community Acquired Brain Injury Service (CABIS)

**Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside**

Patient information leaflet



**Telephone: 0191 566 5650**

**Email: [CabisTeam@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:CabisTeam@cntw.nhs.uk)**

This booklet contains information about who we are, how the service works, and what you can expect during your involvement with us. If you would like further information about anything in this leaflet, please contact us or ask a member of the team.

## **What is CABIS?**

CABIS provides specialist rehabilitation following a brain or head injury. We offer assessment and community based rehabilitation for people who have difficulties in their day to day life following a brain or head injury.

An acquired brain injury may be caused by trauma, infections, surgery or loss of oxygen to the brain. We also see people who attend the local Accident and Emergency Departments because of head injuries and post-concussion symptoms.

### **The service does not provide medical or emergency care.**

If medical concerns arise, please contact your GP, ring 111 or attend your local A&E department.

We provide services for residents of Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside who are aged 16 years and over.

We understand brain injury doesn't just affect individuals. We provide support for families and/or carers to help manage practical and emotional issues which can occur after a brain injury.

## **Accessing the service and locations**

The service is delivered through a combination of clinic-based appointments and home visits, depending on your needs and circumstances.

Appointments are offered across three localities.

Our main bases are:

- Monkwearmouth Hospital, Sunderland
- Gateshead Health Centre
- Cleadon Park Primary Care Centre

Your care will usually be provided within your local area where possible. Appointments may also take place remotely in your home or at your GP surgery if appropriate.

Contact details for the team are provided at the back of this booklet. Please let us know if you need to cancel or rearrange an appointment.

## **Service Pathway**

This usually involves an initial assessment with a clinician, followed by a planned period of rehabilitation. There will be regular reviews of your progress and treatment goals before discharge.

The clinician you see at your initial assessment clinic may not be the same person who provides your ongoing treatment. After this first assessment, your needs are reviewed by the team. You will be added to the waiting list for the most appropriate treatments.

Treatment is allocated across the team to make sure you receive the right support at the right time.

## **What does an initial assessment involve?**

At your first appointment you will be seen by one or more members of staff who have expertise in treating the problems you are experiencing. Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW) is a teaching organisation, and you may be asked if a student can be involved in your assessment or treatment. If you would prefer not to have students present during your consultation, please inform a member of staff.

Your first appointment will last for about one hour, during which we will ask you about the following:

- Your brain injury and any difficulties you are experiencing related to this.
- How you are coping and feeling since your injury.
- How the difficulties you are experiencing are impacting your day to day life.

- The impact on your family/carers and what we can do to support them.
- Your priorities for treatment and goals.

You may also be asked to complete some pen and paper tasks to look at how the injury has affected your thinking skills.

After your assessment, we will agree a care plan with you based on your rehabilitation goals. With consent we will also write to you and your GP to let you know what has been agreed.

- **Please remember to bring your glasses if you wear them**
- **Please bring a list of current medications you are taking**

If you would like to be accompanied by a family member or friend, they are welcome to come into the appointment with you, but we will ask your permission first.

## **Rehabilitation**

### **How long will I be involved with CABIS?**

We will offer you a period of rehabilitation depending on your individual needs. This will be discussed with you once your needs have been fully assessed.

The service is goal based rather than time limited. This means your support is guided by your individual goals and needs, not by fixed time frames. Progress and plans are reviewed regularly and adjusted as your needs change.

We work together with local health and social care professionals to ensure you access the right services to meet your individual needs.

### **How often will I attend?**

Attendance will be agreed with you and your clinician based on your needs. This usually involves more frequent sessions early on, with appointments reducing over time as you progress.

## Who will I see at CABIS?

When you attend CABIS you may see a:

### **Neuropsychologist**

- Help you understand and adjust to life after a brain injury.
- Support your thinking skills, called “cognition”. This includes memory, concentration, processing speed and impulsivity.
- Use pen and paper tasks to understand your difficulties.
- Your mood can change after a brain injury. We can help with anxiety, low mood, stress and feeling overwhelmed.

### **Specialist Occupational Therapist**

- Help you with everyday activities and routines. This includes managing tiredness, memory or attention problems, sensory needs and staying independent at home, work or in the community.
- Support planning a safe return to work or, if work is not possible, finding meaningful activities.
- Can make graded return plans and talk to employers, training providers or other agencies.

### **Specialist Physiotherapist**

- Help with physical recovery. This includes changes in your senses, tight or overactive muscles (called spasticity), movement, strength, balance, posture and mobility.
- Support with returning to exercise such as going back to the gym, swimming or exercise groups.
- Can provide vestibular rehabilitation therapy (VRT) to treat dizziness and balance problems after a brain injury.

### **Specialist Nurse**

- Give you a specialist neurological assessment and ongoing support while you are in the service.
- Look for early signs of brain injury symptoms. This helps with treatment and recovery.

- Check your physical health and talk to your GP if your medication needs review.
- Can also provide VRT for dizziness and balance problems.

### **Specialist Speech and Language Therapist**

- Help with communication, understanding language and swallowing if needed.
- Support you with word-finding difficulties and following conversations.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Coordinator**

- Returning to your old job may not be possible. This can be hard to think about. We help you build work skills, look at new job options and consider training for different work that suits your needs now.

### **Assistant Practitioner and Assistant Psychologist**

- We work with the team to help you practise skills, follow your therapy plan and reach your goals between appointments.

### **Headway Coordinator**

- A brain injury can affect many parts of your life, not just your health. We help with practical issues like time off work, sick pay and benefits.
- Support you to fill in forms, deal with letters and manage paperwork if fatigue or memory problems make this hard.
- Can point you to local services and support carers and family members.
- Headway is a charity that supports people and families affected by acquired brain injury.

## **Recovery and Symptom Management**

Recovery after a brain injury is often gradual and can be unpredictable. Progress is not always straight forward. Some symptoms may take time to improve or may need long-term support.

Family and friends are encouraged to take part in reviews and discussions. This helps everyone understand, plan and adjust together.

A brain injury can affect people in different ways. Symptoms may include:

- Feeling very tired (fatigue)
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Memory or concentration problems
- Changes in mood
- Sleep problems
- Feeling stressed or overwhelmed

Learning about your symptoms early and how to manage them can help recovery. You can rate symptoms like tiredness or dizziness on a scale from 0 (none) to 10 (very severe). This helps you see patterns and know when to slow down or rest.

Here are some simple tips you can try now:

- **Fatigue** - take regular breaks. Pace yourself. Do not try to do too much in one day.
- **Headaches** - rest in a quiet, dark place. Drink water. Stop or reduce activities if pain gets worse.
- **Dizziness or balance problems** - move slowly. Do not make sudden head movements. Sit or lie down if needed. Do not drive.
- **Poor concentration or memory** - do one task at a time. Use notes or reminders. Keep routines simple.
- **Feeling overwhelmed or anxious** - move to a quiet space. Reduce noise and stimulation. Slow your breathing. Take short breaks.
- **Sleep problems** - keep a regular sleep routine. Avoid screens before bed.



## **Discharge**

Once you have achieved your rehabilitation goals, you will be discharged from the service.

You can always contact the service after being discharged for advice. Some people might benefit from planned follow up, and this will be agreed prior to discharge.

On discharge, both you and your GP will be provided with a summary letter. This will include information about your assessment, rehabilitation and an agreed plan to support you in your ongoing recovery.

## **Contacting CABIS for advice after you have been discharged**

We are aware that things can change, and issues can arise at any time. We have a Duty Worker available from Monday to Friday who you can speak to over the phone.

Where possible we will ensure that you speak to someone you know from our service. If this is not possible the Duty Worker will be able to assist.

## **Interpreters**

Staff can arrange an interpreter if you need one.

## **Attending Appointments**

If you are unable to attend an appointment, we kindly ask that you let us know with at least 24 hours' notice where possible.

Appointments that are not attended without notice are recorded as a 'Did Not Attend' (DNA). Repeated DNAs (three or more) may result in a review of your involvement with the service and potential discharge.



## **Dignity and Respect**

CNTW NHS Foundation Trust will treat people with dignity and respect and expect the same in return. We want to ensure that our staff can work, and service users can experience treatment in an environment that is safe and secure.

As part of the NHS, we have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse. Violence against our staff, service users and visitors is a crime.

## **Contact details**

### **Monkwearmouth Hospital**

Newcastle Road  
Sunderland  
SR5 1NB

### **Gateshead Health Centre**

Prince Consort Road  
Gateshead  
NE8 1NB

Telephone: 0191 566 5650

Email: [CabisTeam@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:CabisTeam@cntw.nhs.uk)

## **Useful contacts**

### **Initial Response Service**

Email: [IRS@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:IRS@cntw.nhs.uk)

Telephone: NHS 111 and select the mental health option.

If you are Deaf, you can contact us in a crisis by texting

07860 064 775 or using [signvideo.co.uk/nhs111](https://signvideo.co.uk/nhs111)

### **Headway Helpline**

Telephone: 0808 800 2244

Website: [www.headway.org.uk](http://www.headway.org.uk)

Email: [helpline@headway.org.uk](mailto:helpline@headway.org.uk)

## 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.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/contact/complaints)
- telephone the Complaints Department on 0191 245 6672
- email [complaints@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@cntw.nhs.uk)

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 is to complete the online survey at [www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourvoice)
- complete a Your Voice survey, available on reception areas or from staff
- other options for sharing your feedback and experience can be found on our website [www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk/yourfeedback)



**How are we doing as a service?** Scan this QR code to leave anonymous feedback on the 'Your Voice' webpage.

Once on the site, type in our unique code **SGCABIS** and tell us what you think.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

PALS provide confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns that you may have about any aspect of your or your loved one's care.

We act independently when handling patient and family concerns, liaising with staff, managers and, where appropriate, relevant organisations, to negotiate prompt solutions. If necessary, we can also refer patients and families to specific local or national-based support agencies.

### **South of Tyne**

Telephone: 0800 328 4397

Text: 07825 061 035

Email: [pals@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@cntw.nhs.uk)

Post: Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Garden Lodge,  
Hopewood Park, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0NB

9am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday

An answerphone is always available for you to leave a message. A member of the PALS team will aim to return your call as soon as possible.



Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please telephone the Patient Information Centre on 0191 246 7288

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