



Cumbria, Northumberland,  
Tyne and Wear  
NHS Foundation Trust

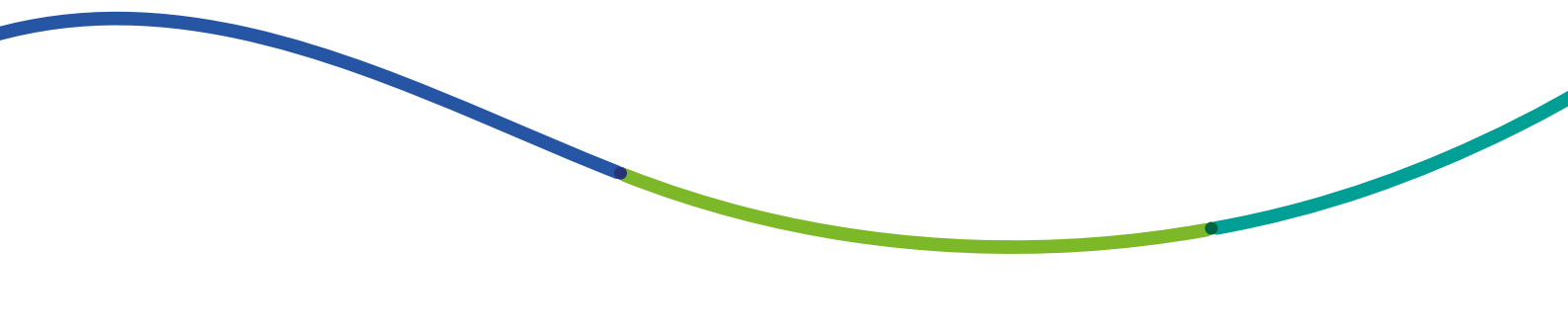


# Rothbury

Secure care

With YOU in mind

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**Rothbury is our specialist medium secure personality disorder unit in Sycamore at Northgate Park.**

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Rothbury is one of two national medium secure inpatient wards on the Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) pathway. The OPD pathway is commissioned by NHS England and HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) for the assessment and treatment of personality difficulties.

Rothbury has 12 inpatient beds. There is a multi-disciplinary team attached to the ward.

The treatment model of Rothbury is a psychologically informed adaptive therapeutic environment in which the multi-disciplinary team helps to engage a diverse group of patients – with a variety of offence histories – to initially stabilise their mental health and risk related behaviours.

The service is equity-focused, providing fair and tailored support so all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

A primary goal of admission to Rothbury is the development of a shared formulation of both care and offending behaviour needs and risks. This helps to inform focused treatment and interventions to assist the service user progress through their custodial sentence.



# The Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) Pathway

The OPD pathway is not a single entity, but a series of connected interventions and activities. All services follow the same principles and work toward the overarching OPD pathway aims but provide different functions to support people through their sentence and according to their intervention and management needs.



The Offender Personality Disorder (OPD) Pathway is a set of psychologically informed services operating across criminal justice and health, underpinned by a set of principles and quality standards. Using evidence-based relational and environmental approaches, it aims to reduce risk associated with serious reoffending and improve mental health within a high-risk, high-harm cohort likely to meet the clinical threshold for a diagnosis of 'personality disorder'.

The OPD Pathway is a jointly funded partnership between His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and NHS England.

Services for people identified are provided in prisons, adult secure mental health services and the community. The OPD pathway provides the framework that underpins the commissioning of these services and enables health and criminal justice agencies to provide a single service offer. It also provides specialist training and support for staff.

**OPD pathway co-commissioners will work with Rotbury service to ensure that they are able to continue to support the wider OPD pathway while remaining aligned to the NHS-led provider collaborative arrangements.**

# Our team

The service is led by a Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist. The unit operates 24/7, supported by a full nursing team led by the Nursing Ward Manager.

Our core multidisciplinary team includes:

- Specialty Doctor in Forensic Psychiatry
- Senior Clinical and Forensic Psychologist
- Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist
- Senior Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Nurse Ward Manager
- Specialist Nurse
- Senior Probation Service Representative
- Service Administrator

We are further supported by:

- Higher Assistant Psychologist
- Social Worker
- Dietician
- General Practitioner and Pharmacy
- Additional Occupational Therapy staff
- Sports, Art and Music Therapists
- Peer Supporter
- Recovery College (with opportunities for co-production, lived-experience input, and vocational support)

In addition, the service benefits from regular input from a Chaplain, offering holistic support to help individuals reflect, build resilience, and sustain hope for the future.



# Service criteria

We work with individuals in prison who are assessed as high or very high risk, where there is a clear link between personality difficulties and offending behaviour.

Typically, these individuals are located in Category B or lower security prisons.

In some cases, a medium secure hospital environment may not be appropriate. This includes situations where there is:

- Severe and acute co-morbid mental illness
- A learning disability
- An acquired brain injury
- Moderate to severe neurodevelopmental difficulties

In such circumstances, alternative pathways of care may be required.



We welcome enquiries prior to a referral.  
Please contact us at:  
[RothburyMSU@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:RothburyMSU@cntw.nhs.uk)



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We aim to create a positive, supportive environment to build confidence and manage emotions in a controlled supportive setting.

”

Please come to Rothbury, you are not insane.

Here, you clear away the mist and fog out from in your brain.

Making your life brighter and full of positivity, instead of a storm with turbulence and rain.

Trust me, I was hard to persuade.

I felt like I was risking my mental state assigning myself to that mental patient fate.

But please believe, that was a big mistake.

There's nothing dodgy here, and you'll find no-one fake; The people here want to help you before it's too late.

And you've resigned to dying behind a prison gate. So now you've read this, don't wait.

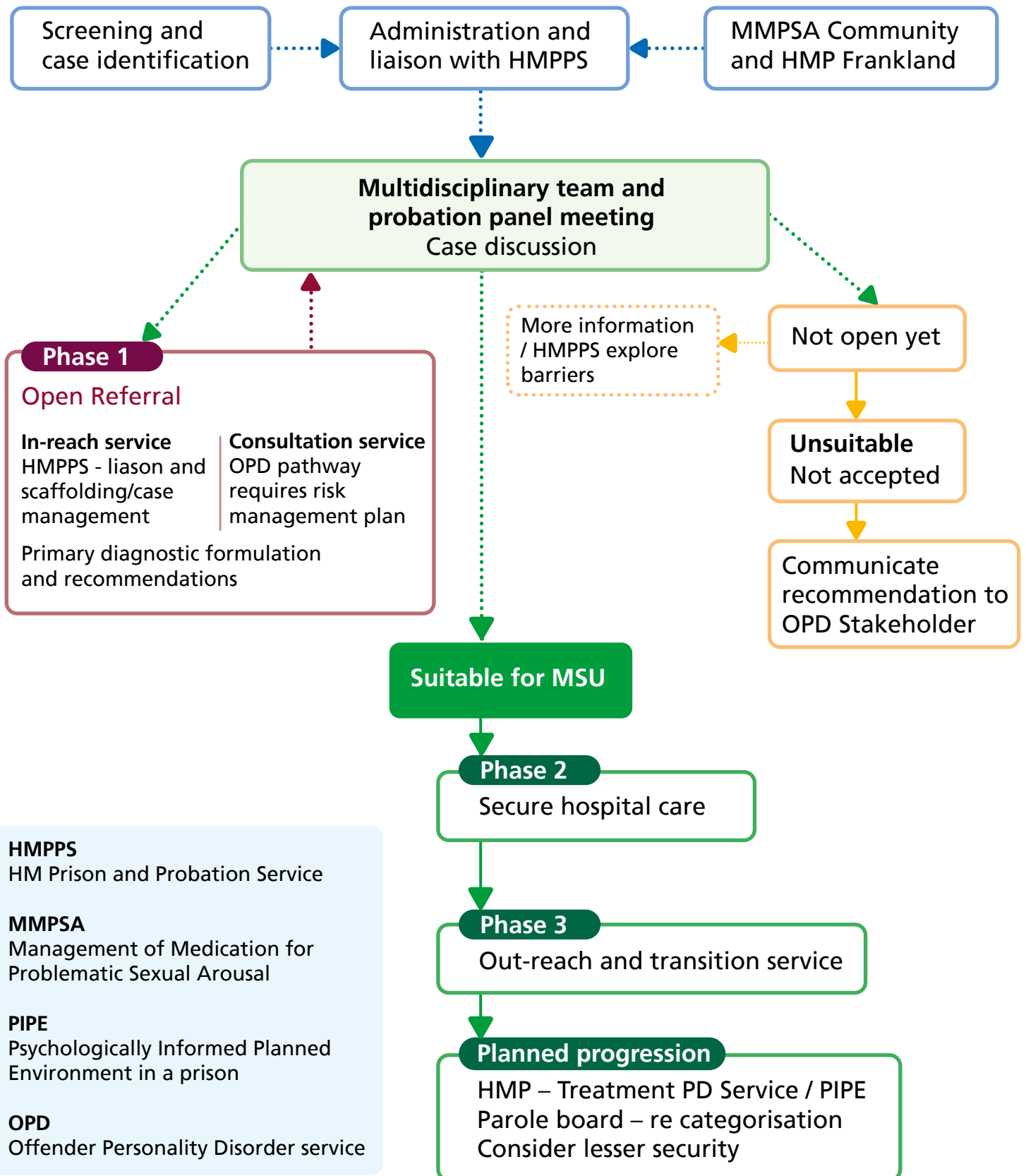
Get word to Ravi and his team, believe me they're great. Because now I look to my future and see a positive fate!

Now I know, waiting so long to apply was my biggest mistake.

Resident at Rothbury Medium Secure Unit

# Rothbury relational specification

This is the process carried out by the team to support the OPD pathway from initial identification in prison, through to the treatment plans.



**HMPPS**  
HM Prison and Probation Service

**MMPSA**  
Management of Medication for Problematic Sexual Arousal

**PIPE**  
Psychologically Informed Planned Environment in a prison

**OPD**  
Offender Personality Disorder service



# Intervention and treatment approaches on the OPD pathway



## In-reach and Consultation Services

- Support and understand relational communications between Health and HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)
- Consider barriers to Progression
- Consider OPD Pathway and risk management plan

## Specialist Personality Disorder Medium Secure Unit

- 6 - 9 months Care plus extension to undertake focused intervention
- Relational risk management
- Stabilisation and Dimensional Diagnostic Formulation
- Focus aimed at clinical resilience and hope
- Reduce risk of 'harm' and recidivism

## Planned progression

- Prison PIPE, ongoing Prison Treatment, Re-Categorisation, Parole Board
- Community resilience – Occupational and Housing Support
- 'User' Expert by Experience

## Out-reach and Transition Service

- Active Communication and OPD Pathway 'Scaffolding' intervention



# Enabling Environment

Rothbury promotes Enabling Environment, the aim is to promote a safe, positive and empowering environment, effective functioning and relationships, and reduce the potential and need for risk and offending behaviour as ways of coping and relating.

We aim to do this by upholding the ten standards of an enabling environment allowing for a safe, supportive and enabling environment for all who live and work on Rothbury.

The ten standards which outline the core values of a healthy environment are:

## **1 Involvement**

Staff and residents share responsibility for the environment.

## **2 Boundaries**

There are expectations of behaviour and processes to maintain and review them.

## **3 Structure**

Engagement and purposeful activity is actively encouraged.

## **4 Belonging**

The nature and quality of relationships are of primary importance.

## **5 Safety**

Support is available for both staff and residents.

## **6 Openness**

External relationships are sought and validated.

## **7 Communication**

It is recognised that people communicate in different ways.

## **8 Development**

There are opportunities to be spontaneous and try new things.

## **9 Leadership**

Leadership takes responsibility for the environment being enabling.

## **10 Empowerment**

Power and authority are open to discussion.

# Specialist intervention

Our multidisciplinary team delivers a range of evidence-based interventions, tailored to each individual's needs and level of risk.

These include both individual sessions and graded group-based work. A key focus of the service is to provide a relational environment in which individuals can:

- Explore and reflect on their difficulties
- Develop an understanding of how their personality impacts behaviour
- Work towards reducing the risk of serious harm and re-offending

## Creating a safe and therapeutic space

At Rothbury, we provide a safe and supportive therapeutic environment where patients and staff can work together.

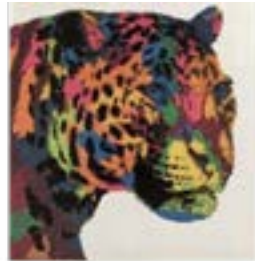
We place great importance on creating a space that enables:

- The building of strong therapeutic relationships
- Exploration and reflection on past and present difficulties
- Understanding the impact of trauma and its links to risk

Our approach is grounded in evidence-based practice and includes:

- Sports and physical activity sessions
- Creative groups and art psychotherapy
- Social and educational opportunities through the Recovery College

Former patients have successfully developed structured themed projects, with several achieving recognition through Koestler Awards for creative achievement.



# Physical health and wellbeing

Our dedicated sports instructors deliver a wide range of exercise groups, sports, and physical activities tailored to individual needs.

Working closely with the multidisciplinary team, they ensure patients receive the right level of support while promoting a culture of physical activity.

The Sycamore site offers excellent indoor and outdoor facilities designed to improve both physical health and emotional wellbeing, while team sports provide valuable opportunities to build relationships, develop trust, strengthen teamwork skills, and foster a sense of belonging.

The Sports Team creates a positive and supportive environment, enabling individuals to:

- Build confidence
- Manage emotions safely
- Boost mood and improve sleep
- Address underlying physical health conditions



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Team Sports are by their very nature great for helping build relationships, working with others, building trust and feeling part of a team.

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To all the staff on Rothbury, please accept my heartfelt thanks for everything you've done for me during my time on the ward.

You have all in your own way helped me to ensure that I have gone through the front door. My success is also yours because without the questions you pose along with a helping hand, I believe that the outcome could have been different. Thank you, one and all.

”

# Sycamore at Northgate Park

Sycamore is a state-of-the-art secure facility which looks after men with a mental illness, learning disability or personality disorder and who have come into contact with the criminal justice system.

The unit has been carefully designed to the highest standards, equipped with cutting-edge technology and a variety of spaces to ensure that patients receive the best possible care. These purpose-built spaces including an education suite, art rooms, sport and exercise facilities, a workshop for woodwork, and gardens.

The unit contains 72 beds across six wards.

- Alwinton
- Berwick
- Elsdon
- Harthope
- Linhope
- Rothbury

Watch a short video tour of Sycamore here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3onvmbsXoA0>



## Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this work and gave up their time to inform and review its content.

A special thanks to Dr Ravi Lingam, Consultant in Forensic Psychiatry and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist, who led the development of this document.

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