



Cumbria, Northumberland,  
Tyne and Wear  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Behaviour Support Service South of Tyne

Information for Referrers



Caring | Discovering | Growing | **Together**

## What is behaviour that challenges?

For the purposes of this team, behaviour that challenges is defined as any behaviour which causes significant distress or danger to the person or others.

Behaviours which challenge may include those which:

- Pose a risk to the person or others e.g. trying to leave home/care home.
- Are unpleasant or inappropriate e.g. inappropriate toileting.
- Are distressing to the person and to others e.g. verbal abuse/aggression.
- Are threatening e.g. physical aggression such as hitting, scratching and biting.
- Are excessive such as: repetitive questioning or constant demand making

## What does the Behaviour Support Service do?

The behaviour support service uses a needs-led model to look at challenging behaviour. We all have needs ranging from basic needs (food, drink) to complex psychological and social needs (love, security, company). When our needs are not met, we will try our best to meet them. For example, if we are hungry, we will find food.

Sometimes our attempts to meet these needs can be challenging to others, especially when we are unable to communicate effectively. For example, meeting the need for food by stealing from another person's plate.

The behaviour support service works closely with staff to understand and address the needs of the client.

During the assessment, we collect information about the client from a variety of sources such as:

- The client
- Friends and family
- The care home
- GP
- Psychiatric notes

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 history
- Their medication regime
- Their brain functioning
- Their current environment

The process of collecting this information usually takes around 4 weeks. An information sharing or formulation session is then offered to the care team (staff, care manager, family etc.) in an attempt to understand the client's behaviour in more depth and to identify what needs are currently being met and what further needs could be met. We work with carers to develop strategies to meet the identified needs.

As a result of this intervention the incidence of behaviour that challenges and/or the distress that it can cause to others will often reduce.

## **What are the referral criteria?**

A referral would be appropriate where:

- Behaviour(s) is/are difficult to manage
- The behaviour is emergent (i.e. is not a life long problem but has emerged from a change in environment/brain or physical functioning etc)
- Physical causes have been ruled out/or are being managed but where challenging behaviour is still present
- There is not a more appropriate service available
- The care team are willing to work with the Behaviour Support Service and can sustain the client in situ during the period of the team's involvement

Referrals come to the team via the single point of access route which is a referral into the local Community Mental Health Team for Older People, usually from:

- Care Managers
- GPs
- Consultants
- The care home staff

This process allows consultation within the team to determine whether the client is appropriate for the Behaviour Support Service.

For further information please call us on Tel: 0303 123 1145

## **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 or you can complete a feedback form.

- Feedback forms are available from Trust staff
- Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672
- You can complete a feedback form electronically by visiting the Trust Website [www.ntw.nhs.uk](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk) (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- Care Managers

## **Contact details**

Behaviour Support Service South of Tyne  
Via locality CMHT Single Point of Contact  
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[www.cntw.nhs.uk](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk) Tel: 0191 246 6800

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