

# FUNCTION FIRST!

Improving symptoms by exploring the  
link between the mind and body



The Paediatric Complex Symptoms Team

## Why have I been referred to Function First?



Your Doctor referred you to us, so you could get help with your physical symptoms that do not have a clear medical explanation or are worse/different from those usually expected with your diagnosis. We can help you as long as you live in Brighton and Hove.

These types of symptoms are quite common. They can sometimes improve quickly, but more often they can be longer-lasting. They can be different for each person and may include headaches, feeling sick, muscle weakness, collapsing and long-term pain (often called chronic or persistent pain).

The doctor referring you has carefully considered your symptoms. They will have talked with you about how our team might help you.

### What do we do?

Our team focuses on the close link between the mind and the body, and we aim to help you understand how they can affect each other as part of our treatment approach. We look at why



you may be getting your symptoms and the different factors that may affect them.

We are here to help you to:



- improve your ability to participate in everyday activities
- get back to doing the things you love
- help you recover from your symptoms or manage with your symptoms better

## How do we do this?

- Provide education and information about different aspects of health and wellbeing
- Undertake joint goal setting with you
- Offer personalised therapies and treatments
- Work with you to develop strategies that are right for you



We know that understanding the different aspects of the symptoms and gradual rehabilitation can help young people get back on track.



## So what will happen at my first appointment?

At the first appointment you will meet with 2 or more members of the team to talk through your symptoms and what difficulties they are causing you.

We will ask how your symptoms affect your daily life including at home and at school, and about any impact on your family. We'll also ask about your interests and hopes for the future.

It is also an opportunity for you to ask any questions or talk about anything else that may be worrying you.

Please remember to bring/wear comfortable clothing as we will usually need to do a physical assessment.



## What will happen next?

Sometimes you may need to have further assessment with individual therapists and then we will discuss with you and agree a treatment plan and possible goals for your time with us if this is appropriate.

We will decide which therapists from the team would meet your needs best, for example our Psychologists may be supporting you with your worries or mood, the Physiotherapists may help you to gradually build up your strength and exercise tolerance, or the Occupational Therapist may discuss strategies to help you participate in your daily activities. As an integrated team, there will be some overlap in these roles and we may see you jointly. It is often useful for us to involve your school and see how they can help too.



We usually then meet back up with you as a team after 6 months to review how things are going. Whatever the plan we'll be working together with you, so you can start to get back into your life and do more of the things you enjoy!

## When will I stop seeing the team?

- If you are managing your symptoms well or if they have reduced enough that you no longer need our support



- If you are not finding our approach helpful or if another service could better meet your needs
- When you reach your 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Depending on your symptoms, you may be referred on to adult services if this is right for you. This will be discussed with you nearer the time.

## Notes and Questions:

As you are reading this leaflet, you may find it helpful to make some notes of things you want to discuss or that you want to remember to tell us about at your first appointment, such as a list of medicines you use, or things that are particularly bothering you.

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# Team Members

<b>Dr Leonie Perera</b>	<b>Consultant Paediatrician</b>
<b>Dr Ruth Kendall</b>	<b>Senior Clinical Psychologist</b>
<b>Dr Emma Adams</b>	<b>Clinical Psychologist</b>
<b>Helen Salter</b>	<b>Senior Physiotherapist</b>
<b>Johanna Lord</b>	<b>Senior Physiotherapist</b>
<b>Julia Krikman</b>	<b>Senior Occupational Therapist</b>

## Contact Details

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