

Questions & Answers

A mental health assessment by the Nursing Assessment Team (NAT) is not a test or an exam. It is about helping you. While we will be asking many personal questions, what you share with us in the assessment is confidential and will not be shared with others without your permission. The more open and honest you are, the easier it will be to get you the right kind of help. It may also be very helpful for us to review any past psychiatric assessments you have completed.

Bringing someone to support you:

If you feel that you need support to attend the appointment, you can bring a friend or relative to support you; however, we would like to speak with you alone for a portion of the assessment.

What you'll talk about in your assessment:

During the assessment, the NAT member will talk about your needs.

The conversation might cover:

- mental health symptoms and experiences
- feelings, thoughts and actions
- physical health and wellbeing
- housing and financial circumstances
- employment and training needs
- social and family relationships
- culture and ethnic background
- gender and sexuality
- use of drugs or alcohol
- past experiences, especially of similar problems
- your safety and other people's
- whether anyone depends on you, such as a child or elderly relative
- strengths and skills, and what helps you best
- hopes and aspirations for the future

We will provide a safe place for you to talk about sensitive topics. We would encourage you to share your experiences with us so that we can get a true picture of what you are struggling with. We respect your decisions in this regard and know that this may be difficult for you. You only have to talk about what you feel comfortable with, however,

the more you're able to share, the easier it is for the NAT to determine what help/services will work best for you.

At the end of the assessment:

When the NAT nurse feels they have all the information they need, they will share their preliminary thoughts with you, and discuss their initial assessment findings in clear language.

You will be able to ask questions about your condition, the diagnostic impression, and the treatments/resources which may be options for you to consider.

The NAT nurse will then synthesize the information you have provided and complete a written comprehensive mental health nursing assessment. We will also provide you with information about how to navigate the mental health system and services you may require. Should you require a referral to a particular service, we will outline how to do so, and identify any wait times you may expect. We will also provide you with clear instructions as well as any referral forms required to do so.

You can expect to receive the full assessment and treatment recommendations once it has been completed (within 30 days). You can think about it in your own time and share/discuss it with any other care providers. We are available to discuss the assessment with you in a 15-minute telephone call at your convenience.

What you can do before and during the assessment:

- make some notes about what you want to discuss before your appointment
- tick each point off during the appointment, when they've been covered
- ask as many questions as you need to about anything that is not clear at the end of assessment

The Purpose of a one-hour follow-up appointment:

- Your needs can change over time so it might be relevant to review your treatment and/or progress
- If a treatment or mental health service is not working for you. It might be that another approach or a brief re-assessment is needed to find a resource/treatment that's better for you.
- Your review will be a face-to-face meeting at the office with the same NAT member who assessed you.

NAT Psychiatrist get involvement and cost in your care:

The NAT nurse will complete the comprehensive assessment, and a determination will be made by the nurse as to whether an additional meeting with a psychiatrist is warranted to assist you in your recovery. Most individuals who receive an assessment will not require involvement with our psychiatrist. To be seen by the psychiatrist, your Primary Care Provider will be contacted to ensure they are willing to implement any medication recommendations made by the psychiatrist. There are no additional charges to be seen by the psychiatrist.

Role of your Primary Care Provider:

The psychiatrist is not available to follow you going forward. Once the psychiatric assessment piece is complete the psychiatrist will forward their determination regarding psychiatric diagnosis and treatment recommendations to your Primary Care Provider to implement. In rare instances, the psychiatrist will decide to see you for an additional appointment if they deem it necessary.

Currently there is a shortage of psychiatrists working in our mental health system. Your Primary Care Provider is the health care professional that has the means to implement treatment under the recommendations of a psychiatrist. It is important that your Primary Care Provider be willing to implement the treatment recommendations that are made. If they are unwilling to do so, our psychiatrist will not be able to see you.

Payment:

Payment is to be made in full prior to your assessment. You will receive a receipt which you can submit to your insurance provider.