



Maudsley Centre for  
Child and Adolescent  
Eating Disorders

# Informational pack

Your handy downloadable information pack will tell you everything you need to know about your first appointment with MCCAED.

Please make sure you read it thoroughly

The following document contains subjects on:

- Before we meet you
- Your first appointment
- Who you will see?
- Are there any medical tests?
- Attending with carers or alone
- What if you are nearly 18?
- Confidentiality

**This document was written by the team at MCCAED**



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## Before we meet:

Once your referral has been accepted, we'll send you all the details of your first appointment: where to come, who you'll be seeing, and what to expect. We'll also email you a link to some online questionnaires, which will give us a better idea of who you are and what you're going through. These questionnaires cover different areas of your life which will help us to understand you better.

## Your first appointment:

Your first appointment is one of the most important steps you'll be taking on the road to recovery.

It's an opportunity for us to get to know you and your family better, and for you to find out more about how our service can help you.

We'll be meeting for 2 to 3 hours - this is the longest appointment you'll ever have with us. The earlier treatment can start, the better your chances of a full and speedy recovery. A longer first appointment enables us to complete a thorough assessment, identify your eating disorder (if any) and even begin your treatment that very day!

Throughout the process, we will constantly adjust our approach to suit you and your family. That's because everyone is different, and what works for some people may not work for others. We'll make sure you get the treatment that works for you.

### This is what we'll cover during your first appointment:

- We'll go into detail about any eating disorder you may have, its potential symptoms and effects, and how severe (or not) it currently is.
- We'll provide feedback about any co-existing mental (e.g. depression) or physical (e.g. low heart rate) conditions you may have.
- We'll give you advice about what you should be eating. We might also provide you with a written diet guide called a meal plan.
- We'll outline some practical first steps that will begin to address your worries about eating.
- We'll work with you to create your unique overall treatment plan, specially tailored to your preferences, difficulties and strengths.

On the day of your assessment, we'll ask you to complete some more questionnaires in person. Some of these will provide our team with additional information about you, and others will allow you to give us feedback about your first experience with us.



## Who will I see?

We're a close team of professionals who will work together to find solutions that work for you. Cooperating in this way allows us to exchange ideas and use our different strengths to paint a more complete picture of the difficulties you may be experiencing. That's why you may meet several members of our team on your first visit.

The person who leads your assessment will typically become your Care Coordinator and main therapist. Over time, you will get to know your Care Coordinator very well: he/she will usually work with you from your first meeting, until you're discharged from our service. Some other members of the team may also become involved following discussion with you and your family where necessary.

## Are there any medical tests?

As part of the assessment, one of our doctors or nurses will give you a brief physical examination. They'll measure your height and weight, and depending on how unwell you are, they might take your temperature or blood pressure as well. We may need to conduct some further tests right after your first appointment, such as an ECG (a completely painless test of your heart function) or a quick blood test. During your physical, you'll always be accompanied by an adult chaperone of your own gender and choosing, such as your mother or a female/male member of staff.

## Do I have to attend with my parents? Can I be seen alone?

We always recommend that children and teens come to their first appointment accompanied by one or both parents. Research has shown that eating disorder treatments are much more effective if your parents are involved and play a key role in supporting you and your recovery.

However, attending with your parents doesn't mean that you have to be together for the whole appointment. We think that it's very important for young people to have the opportunity to talk to us privately for some of the time if they wish. Similarly, your parents will also have the opportunity to talk to us privately.

Of course, if you don't feel that you need to talk to us without your parents, that's absolutely fine. Alternatively, if you're aged 16 or above and would prefer to come to your first appointment entirely on your own, then we are happy to accommodate you. We understand that it can be tough to open up about your experiences, and we will always act with sensitivity and respect.

## What if I am nearly 18?

We offer assessments for young people up to the age of 18. If you are less than 6 months from your 18th birthday, we will usually arrange for a colleague in the adult eating disorders service to be present at your first meeting. This allows us to ensure that your transition into the adult service is as smooth and seamless as possible. However if you are reaching 18 very soon, for example within the next 4 weeks, we may contact you to suggest that your referral and assessment should be with the adult team, otherwise you will have to tell your story twice which some people may find very hard.



## Will my information be kept confidential?

We believe that young people and their families have the right to express themselves freely. That's why any sensitive information that we receive from you will be treated as strictly confidential. We will never attempt to obtain information about you, or share anything with your school, parents, friends or other parties, without your permission.

The main exception to this rule, which we will discuss during your first appointment, is if you were to tell us something that suggests that you, or someone else, is at risk of significant harm. In such a situation, we may need to share enough information with the appropriate people to keep you safe. We keep notes from each appointment, which are stored on SLAM's secure electronic records system.

## What happens after the first appointment?

**There are two main outcomes:**

- If you have an eating disorder, we will usually offer you further treatment. If you're happy to go ahead, you'll next be seen within a week or two.
- If you do not have an eating disorder, we'll let you know if you need treatment for any other difficulties. We'll then help you find the support you need from other services.

You can find out more about our treatments [here](#).