

CAMHS

**st John
of God** 
**Community
Mental Health**

**Child and Adolescent
Mental Health Services at Lucena Clinic**

Understanding CAMHS: A Guide for Parents and Young People

**Plain
English** 
Approved by NALA



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About this booklet

CAMHS stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, pronounced “cams”. This booklet has information on:

- What CAMHS is
- Who CAMHS is for
- How you can access CAMHS
- The pathway(s) through CAMHS
- The people working in CAMHS
- Information on day hospitals and in-patient units
- Contact details for each of our clinics
- Useful additional information
- Other supports available.



What is CAMHS?

CAMHS is a free specialist service for young people up to the age of 18. It is for those who are experiencing **moderate to severe** mental health difficulties and who need treatment from a team of mental health professionals.

'Moderate to severe' means that the mental health problems are severe enough to cause substantial distress to the young person, their family, others, or all three.

The young person would have significant difficulty in many areas of their life including:

- Development
- Family and peer relationships
- School
- Self-care
- Play or leisure activities.

Other supports may not have worked.



Who is CAMHS for?

CAMHS is suitable for young people who have moderate to severe mental health needs including:

- Moderate to severe anxiety disorders
- Moderate to severe depression
- Moderate to severe eating disorders
- Psychosis
- Thoughts of suicide, or self-harm or both in the context of a moderate to severe mental health disorder.

CAMHS is also suitable for young people who meet criteria for moderate to severe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), with or without moderate to severe mental health needs.



How can I access CAMHS for Mental Health?

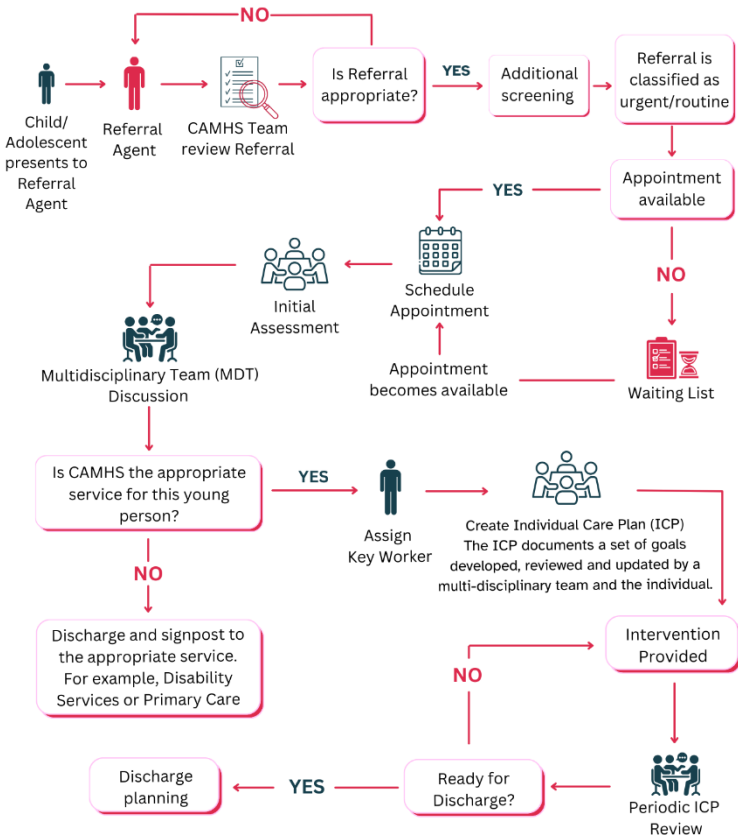
Talk to your GP (family doctor) if you would like to access CAMHS. Tell them about any problems that are making everyday life difficult.

If your GP thinks CAMHS can best meet your needs, they will make a referral to us. They will do this by writing to your local CAMHS team using a national referral form.

The CAMHS team will look at the information provided and decide whether CAMHS is the right service for you. If it is not, we will try to recommend other services that would fit better. If we are not sure, we might ask for more information. If CAMHS is the right service, we will decide whether the need is 'urgent' or 'routine'. We give urgent referrals priority when making appointments. We will then write a letter to your GP to let you know about our decisions.



Mental Health Referral & Clinical Pathway



How can I access CAMHS for ADHD?

Talk to your GP (family doctor) if you would like to access CAMHS for ADHD. Tell them about any features of ADHD you experience and how long they have been present.

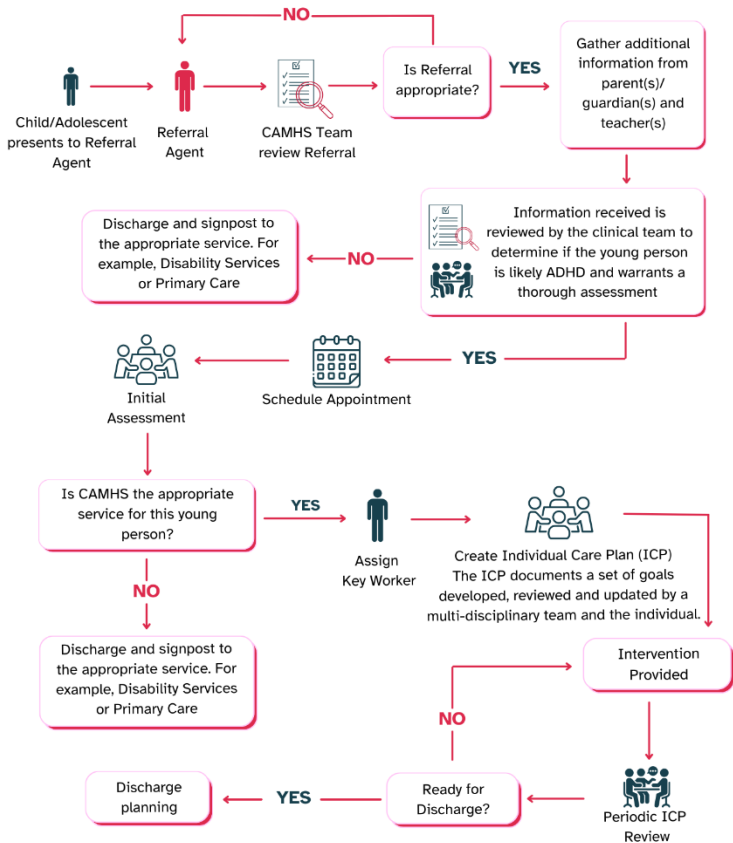
If your GP thinks an ADHD assessment is indicated, they will send a referral to us. They will do this by writing to your local CAMHS team using a national referral form.

The CAMHS team will look at the information provided and decide whether to send out a screening pack. This includes questionnaires and forms for the young person's parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher(s) to complete and return. All the information gathered will be reviewed to decide if an ADHD assessment is needed at this time.

We will then write to you and your GP to let you know about these decisions.



ADHD Referral & Clinical Pathway



NOTE:
Continue to assess at every stage whether CAMHS is the right service for the child or adolescent.

Your pathway through CAMHS –

3 steps

1. Meet with CAMHS

The first appointment at CAMHS is called a ‘triage’ (initial assessment) appointment. If we are meeting you for an initial assessment, you will need to send us some documents beforehand. These include:

- Any assessment and therapy reports from other services you have used in the past, for example, reports from therapists, psychology assessments, occupational therapy reports, speech and language therapy reports
- Consent forms.

We cannot see a young person for assessment without consent forms completed by all legal guardians.





We may also ask you to complete and return some questionnaires before the first appointment. This will help us to decide which services would be best.

The aim of a triage appointment is to decide if CAMHS is the service that can best meet the young person's needs.

You may have to wait a while for the first appointment with us. It is helpful if you keep a diary of any difficulties you are experiencing as you wait for the appointment.

At the first appointment, the young person and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet one or two members of the team. They will listen to your concerns. The team will use a form to gather information.



It is helpful for us to know what's been happening so we can provide the right help including:

- When the difficulties started
- How the difficulties cause problems in your life
- What could have caused the difficulties
- Why the difficulties are ongoing
- What helps
- What does not help
- What you would like to change
- What has been going well
- The young person's and family's strengths.

After the triage assessment, the team will decide if your needs are best met through CAMHS. This decision will be communicated to both you and your GP.



2. Working with CAMHS

Our team will meet to discuss all the information we have gathered.

We will assign a 'key worker' to the young person. They will talk you through an Individual Care Plan (ICP). This plan lists:

- The areas to work on
- How we will work on them
- Who will be working with the young person.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and the young person themselves have a big part to play in developing this plan and making it work. We aim to provide support and tools to improve the young person's difficulties. The whole family have an important role to play to achieve this.



The supports available in CAMHS can help:

- understand difficulties better
- deal with overwhelming feelings
- cope with the challenges in life such as:
 - School
 - Family
 - Friends

Part of the Individual Care Plan (ICP) may involve assessment, group work, individual work, parent/family work, and/or taking medication. The ICP can also involve some work with organisations outside of CAMHS.



Some people work with us for a few months and some for longer.



3. Review progress and move on

Your key worker will check in regularly to make sure you are reaching your care plan goals.

When you are finished your work with us, we will discharge you from CAMHS. We will let your GP know this has happened.

Your key worker may put you in contact with further community supports if you need them after you have finished working with us.

Our services are for those up to 18 years old. You may turn 18 while attending us and need further support from adult mental health services or a disability service. If so, we will make that referral for you.



Who works at CAMHS?

In CAMHS we work as a multidisciplinary team. The team is made up of different professionals with different training backgrounds. We work together to:

- Assess the young person's strengths and challenges
- Help the young person understand their mental health
- Provide therapy
- Provide medication support
- Assess progress

You may meet some of the following team members depending on your care plan.

Administrator

An administrator answers the team phone line and can connect you to the right people to speak to. They may also pass on messages from the rest of the team.



Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

This is a specialist medically trained doctor who leads the team and coordinates the overall treatment plan.

Registrar

This is a medically trained doctor. Most registrars are training to become consultant psychiatrists.

Psychologist

A psychologist has specialist training in assessment and mental health interventions.

Mental Health Nurse

You might meet this type of nurse for medication reviews. They might also meet you for assessment and therapy.



Speech and Language Therapist

Speech and language therapists support you to communicate more effectively, and with a range of speech, language and communication needs.

Social Worker

A social worker helps explore any issues that may be causing difficulty in the family and how to solve them.

Occupational Therapist

An occupational therapist helps with everyday life skills and supports young people to get back to doing the things they enjoy and would benefit from.

Social Care Worker

A social care worker aims to build relationships with families so they can deliver an Individual Care Plan in a way that suits each family.



Our clinics

Rathgar

Phone: 01 492 3596

Address: 59 Orwell Road, Rathgar, Dublin 6,
D06 P9W4.

Dun Laoghaire

Phone: 01 280 9809

Address: Century Court, 100 George's Street
Upper, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 XH50.

Tallaght

Phone: 01 452 6333

Address: Exchange Hall, Belgard Square North,
Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 V260.

Bray

Phone: 01 286 6886

Address: Sessa House, Vevay Road, Bray,
Co. Wicklow, A98 N883.

Wicklow

Phone: 0404 25591

Address: Summer Hill, Corporation Lands,
Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow, A67 YN63.



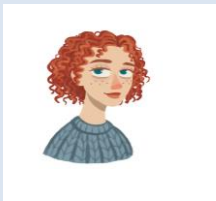
The HUB and inpatient units

The HUB

The 'HUB' in Lucena provides extra support in times of crisis. Here, you take part in a short (usually 2-4 week) programme of activities and therapies before going back to your main clinical team.

Inpatient unit

An adolescent inpatient unit is a hospital where a young person stays if they are very unwell. The local CAMHS team may recommend a stay if the young person needs more intensive support.



While in hospital, there will likely be a range of therapies, outlined in your care plan. A teacher will also help with specific areas of schoolwork.



Useful additional information

Advocacy

CAMHS is your service. Please go to our website or ask one of our staff for help if you:

- need more information
- want to give a compliment
- want to complain
- want to make a freedom of information request

Our website is www.lucenaclinic.ie

Engagement

We encourage young people and their families attending Lucena Clinic CAMHS to provide feedback on their experiences through:

- Our compliments and complaints procedure
- Regular engagement projects run at Lucena
- Representation on the HSE engagement committees with more details at

Mental Health Engagement - HSE.ie



CAMHS

The HSE has more information about CAMHS:

<https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/services-support/camhs/introduction/>

CAMHS Operational Guideline

You can see the HSE document on what to expect from your CAMHS at:

<https://assets.hse.ie/media/documents/ncr/camhs-operational-guideline-2019.pdf>

Mental Health

You can get more information on mental health and wellbeing, supports and rights at:

www2.hse.ie/mental-health/



Glossary

Words used in CAMHS

Assessment – this is when the family and CAMHS team explore the young person's mental health needs through discussion and/or testing.

Diagnosis – this is a medical word that describes mental health difficulties or illness, for example, depression.

Discharge – this means the young person has finished their work in CAMHS. They may still need further supports outside of CAMHS.

Individual Care Plan (ICP) – the plan made to improve mental health and how we will work together do this.



Key Worker - coordinates the care provided by all other team members and is your point of contact for any queries.

Intervention – managing difficulties using therapy, medication and/or other supports. The aim is to help reduce distress and/or improve day to day life.

Recovery – an approach that:

- supports your personal development
- builds your confidence
- talks about what matters to you

Referral – when we ask another person on the team or a different service to see you.

Review – this is where we check your progress since your last appointment.



Other supports

In an emergency outside of CAMHS working hours, please contact the Emergency Services on 112 or 999. You can present to your nearest children's hospital if under 16 years old, and nearest adult's hospital if over 16 years old.

Primary Care Services

HSE services support wellbeing for those with mild or moderate needs. You can access primary care psychology for mental health needs. For help anytime you can free text 'HELLO' to 50808.



Jigsaw

Depending on where you live, where your GP service is and/or the young person's school, Jigsaw offer free mental health support for young people aged 12-25 with mild or moderate mental health concerns. Their website is www.jigsaw.ie



Pieta House

Suicide and self-harm support service. Text HELP to 51444. Available 24 hours (texts are not free). Their website is www.pieta.ie.



Turn2Me

Online counselling and supports helping to cope with mental health needs. Their website is www.turn2me.ie.



ADHD Ireland

Information for young ADHD people and their families. They provide non-medication ADHD supports. Their website is www.adhdireland.ie.



AsIAm

Information for young autistic people and their families. Their website is www.asiam.ie.



Spunout.ie

Video animations about depression, anxiety, feeling different, being bullied and loneliness
www.spunout.ie



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This publication is part of a larger project at our service. The project aims to extend hospitality to neurodivergent service users and families and to improve their experience of our service. We want to create an environment that accommodates everyone and celebrates diversity. It is funded by St John of God Hospitaller Services Group and St John of God Foundation Better Life programme.