

Traumatic Stress Clinic

Information for Referrers

Inclusion criteria

- Age 18 and above
- Resident of boroughs of Camden or Islington, or have a GP in Camden or Islington

PTSD diagnosis

The TSC sees adults who meet formal diagnostic criteria for PTSD to prolonged or multiple traumas, are too complex for treatment within primary care services, and wish to engage with structured, trauma-focused and reliving-oriented treatment.

Where PTSD presents together with other mental health problems, PTSD must be the primary presenting problem.

Suitability for trauma-focused treatment

PTSD treatment involves talking through past traumatic memories in detail during weekly therapy sessions in order to process distressing memories. PTSD symptoms may temporarily increase at the start of treatment, as the person will start to talk about past traumas they have previously sought to avoid. Therefore, before making a referral, please consider the person's suitability for this type of treatment.

In doing so please consider the following:

Stability

Is the person stable enough to be able to engage in trauma-focused treatment?

Please consider:

- **Socio-economic stability** such as housing, financial security, family and legal situation.
- **Emotional stability** including presence of psychotic symptoms and emotional regulation difficulties which will interfere with or be exacerbated by treatment.
- **Substance use**, including drug and alcohol use, and use of prescribed and non-prescribed medications that may impact on the effectiveness of treatment.
- **Contact with crisis services** where people who have been under the care of crisis services in the past 6 months or are likely to require crisis support whilst waiting for treatment would not be eligible for referral.

- People presenting with active suicidal risk or risk to others will not be suitable for the TSC.
- Anybody who has a recurrent history of requiring crisis services without being able to use interventions offered to reduce this risk would not be suitable for the TSC.
- Trauma-focused treatment is not indicated in situations of ongoing risk of further trauma, such as domestic violence, or involvement in current legal action related to the trauma, for example, against alleged perpetrators.

Co-morbidity of mental and physical health difficulties:

- People with additional mental and physical health difficulties, where the PTSD symptoms are not the most troubling symptoms for clients, and where these additional difficulties would be a barrier to PTSD treatment, would not be suitable for the TSC.
- These sorts of conditions could include active psychosis; severe pain; heavy substance misuse; severe depression and hopelessness or personality disorders where the person's main difficulties are related to the personality disorder.

Capacity to engage in trauma-focused treatment

- The person is willing to talk about the past traumatic memories in treatment.
- Able to attend appointments regularly. A person who cancels or does not attend appointments on a regular basis is unlikely to benefit from trauma-focused work.

Clients who have previously had TSC treatment

- We are currently unable to offer further treatment to people who have had a previous prolonged package of treatment at the TSC, due to the demands on the service. Exceptions may be made if a person has experienced additional traumatic events since treatment ended.
- People who have had repeated referrals to the TSC or similar services and have had several unsuccessful attempts at engagement or treatment may not be considered appropriate for the service if there is no reason to assume that their situation has changed.