

10 November 2023

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy

The questions below are regarding Adult mental health services and treatments offered:

Can you advise if EMDR therapy, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing, is available through the Belfast Trust?

Adult Mental Health Services:

Belfast Trust do not have a commissioned EMDR service. However, a number of teams have individual practitioners trained in EMDR and they will offer this treatment modality within their specialised teams.

Psychological Services

EMDR is one of a range of Psychological Therapies that are available across Psychological Services in Belfast Trust – staff who deliver it have specific training in EMDR.

How many sessions are offered?

Adult Mental Health Services:

This is variable and dependent on an individual's presentation and response to EMDR. We do not routinely collect this information in a way it can be extracted for counting.

Psychological Services:

Number of sessions offered are clinically determined. It is likely that EMDR would be offered as part of the therapeutic interventions in someone's psychological care. We do not routinely collect this information in a way it can be extracted for counting.

What criteria must a patient meet in order to be referred to receive this treatment?

Adult Mental Health Services:

As per previous response, EMDR is not a standalone service, therefore the Trust do not accept referrals for EMDR only.

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Psychological Services:

Similar to Mental health, we do not offer a stand-alone EMDR service. We would anticipate that any client undertaking EMDR should meet the same criteria as with any other trauma exposure based work, in relation to being appropriately resourced and with sufficient support being available (both in session and in between sessions) to support any identified risks.

There are NICE guidelines which can be used to support decision making. Ultimately as with the delivery of any Psychological Therapy, there should be clinically led reasons why EMDR is the treatment of choice. Suitability for treatment should form part of a wider assessment process by the clinician and in discussion with the patient.

How can this be accessed? For example, self-referral, GP referral, CMHT referral, Trust CBT therapist referral, Psychiatrist referral, etc.?

Adult Mental Health Services:

As per response above.

Psychological Services:

Referrals into Psychological Services have different pathways, depending on the service - generally due to the small resource available. Psychological Services are a specialist service available to or embedded into other Trust teams including, for example, Physical Health teams and Mental Health Services - referrals are internal within the Trust rather than pathways being open directly to Primary Care or self-referral. As per above EMDR delivery would be a clinical decision.