

Why is specialist treatment important?

Eating disorders have a huge impact on both the families and the young people who are effected by them. The aim of a family therapy interventions is to help the young person, with the support of the family, to return to health to regain a normal relationship with food and reverse the physical and psychological effects of an eating disorder. We do this by supporting the family to help a young person eat again in graduated steps safely, to reduce unhelpful Eating disorder behaviours and then regain and maintain healthy eating for themselves.

Family therapy will help to support all family members towards recovery. Parents and carers are crucial in this work, so we make sure they are aware of the physical dangers of the illness and support them as habits are challenged.

Where appropriate other evidenced based therapies will be used to help the young person recover. This includes Group work and individual work. We will monitor and care for both a young persons physical and their emotional health during recovery.

Once they are eating more regular meals and weight is gradually getting back to normal, we can help to address any problems that may have been present prior to the eating disorder developing. We will then start to look more at the ways to maintain positive changes and how to access future support as required.

Cornwall's Children and Young Peoples Eating Disorder Service (CEDS)

In recent years, we have changed our eating disorder pathway dramatically. We have a very good success rate with young people conquering their eating disorders when the young person and the family work together with our team of health professionals including nurses, doctors, psychologists, dieticians and therapists.

We constantly work to deliver a fully equitable service across the county as we continue to develop the service.

Any feedback you can give us is greatly valued, as it helps us to be the best that we can be.

Additional resources

<http://www.feedyourinstinct.com.au/>

A toolkit to help parents/carers who are concerned that their child may be developing an unhealthy relationship with food, weight or their body

<https://anorexiafamily.com/>

Practical information and advice for families whose children have an eating disorder

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>

The UKs Eating Disorder Charity who aim to be a champion, a guide and a friend to anyone affected by eating disorders

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Information Guide

Cornwall's

Children and Young People's Eating Disorder Service

CEDS

Our service helps young people who have an eating disorder (Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa) by working with them and their families using evidence based treatments, primarily the Maudsley family-based therapy model.



Cornwall Partnership  NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Cornwall Hospitals  NHS Trust

 Kernow Health
Keeping General Practice at the heart of patient care

 NHS
University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust

What is an eating disorder?

Eating disorders are characterised by an abnormal attitude towards food that causes someone to change their eating habits and behaviour. A person with an eating disorder may focus excessively on their weight and shape.

This can lead to them making unhealthy choices about food with damaging results to their health.

Causes for an eating disorder can be biological as well as environmental. The factors are usually complex and may involve those factors that provoke the disorder as well as those that continue it. Risk factors that can make someone more likely to have an eating disorder include:

- Having a family history of eating disorders, depression or substance misuse
- Being criticised for their eating habits, body shape or weight
- Being overly concerned with being slim, particularly if combined with pressure to be slim from society or for a job (for example ballet dancers, models or athletes)
- Certain characteristics, for example, having an obsessive personality, an anxiety disorder, low self-esteem or being a perfectionist
- Particular experiences, such as sexual or emotional abuse, or the death of someone special
- Difficult relationships with family members or friends
- Stressful situations, for example problems at work, school or university

Treatment for an Eating disorder

We deliver evidence based treatments . The therapists will assess the help needed and decide the best treatment to help the young person overcome the eating disorder. The young person will also be asked to complete outcome measures to help the team further understand how treatment is progressing.

The people and treatments in the service are :

- Family therapists : provide Family Based Therapy (FBT) to support all family members to understand the illness and find ways of making a difference to help the young person
 - Dietitians : will support with a meal plan to meet the young person's nutritional needs. They can help with any queries around food and it's relation to bodily functioning and optimum health.
 - Psychiatrist : to make sure there is nothing we are missing and to prescribe medication when helpful to manage some of the strong worries and thoughts
 - Parenting group therapy : a 6 week rolling programme for parents/carers alongside other parents/carers helping them understand the disorder and what they can do to help the young person recover
 - Multi-family group therapy : 4 consecutive days of intensive therapy alongside other families managing the similar difficulties to facilitate a new way of thinking about habits and behaviours
 - Individual therapy : Psychologist / mental health clinicians work closely with the young person and look at how thoughts affect feelings, which in turn affect behaviours. This also helps to build a relationship where the young person can begin to share thoughts and feelings that get in the way of recovery
- Restricting food and remaining underweight for a prolonged amount of time can be extremely dangerous to the body and its vital organs. You will also see :
- CEDS medical team (paediatrician, speciality doctor, nurses, healthcare staff) to make sure the illness does not impact severely on physical wellbeing. There will be regular appointments with the team to monitor physical health. They will provide the information to the therapist to use as part of therapy and to help manage recovery and the care plan.

Where will therapy be provided?

We are a small specialist county wide service. Appointments will take place at specific times and locations in the county where you will meet various members of the team in one place. Unfortunately due to the geographical size of Cornwall, you are likely to need to travel to where the specialist team are working from . We also unfortunately cannot be very flexible with the timings of appointments.

We hope that young people can remain living at home during their recovery.

However, there may be times when hospital admission might be necessary and the local paediatric ward (available beds dependant) will admit for a three week period of supported feeding.

The aim is to support recovery and to prevent the need for admission to a specialist child and adolescent mental health unit or specialist eating disorder unit, which would be for a longer period of time.