

Bath Centre for Fatigue Services (BCFS)

Specialist help for Adults with enduring fatigue

Fatigue & Lifestyle Management Group Programme

Patient Feedback (2018-2019)

The Service

BCFS is based at the Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases and has been part of the Royal United Hospitals since February 2015. We are an outpatient service providing support for adults with enduring fatigue. We have three service strands:

- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME)
- Cancer-related fatigue
- Chronic fatigue due to long-term conditions

The team is made up of Occupational Therapists, Psychologists and assistants. We also provide placements for students from The University of Bath and the University of the West of England.

Group Programme

The fatigue and lifestyle management programme is a 6 week course that runs once a week, with group follow-up sessions and 1:1 support where needed. The programme is underpinned by evidence-based practice and adopts a holistic approach to long term condition management.

Group Programme Feedback 2018-2019

In the 2018-2019 financial year we received feedback from 116 patients who attended a group programme for fatigue. This feedback gives us insight into the usefulness of the strategies and topics covered during the programme and whether patient needs are being met.

More than 99% of patients would recommend the programme to someone else with fatigue. Reasons for this included the programme being helpful in 'knowing my condition' better, feeling 'more supported' and gaining 'useful' and 'professional advice'.

The most common themes for most helpful aspects of the programme were meeting other people with fatigue, being accepted and understood, sharing experiences and knowledge, and personalising the topics.

Less than 26% of patients reported any unhelpful aspects of the programme, but those that did mostly commented on practical aspects of the programme i.e. the length of sessions, location and noise from outside the room.

Feedback on the Group Programme Content:

Patients were asked to report on the helpfulness of the group programme content. The majority of responses were positive ('very helpful' or 'helpful'):

Understanding fatigue – 96%
Activity & energy management – 97%
Managing thoughts & feelings – 91%
Mindfulness – 79%
Values & goals – 94%
Communication – 92%
Activity Rest and Sleep Logs – 91%
Stress & relaxation – 95%

Reasons for some of the 'unhelpful' responses to mindfulness included "*mindfulness is just not for me*" and "*already quite mindful*". However, respondents did acknowledge that mindfulness is "*very effective for some*" and that "*maybe more practice will help*"

Feedback on the BCFS Team and Hospital:

When asked specific questions about the team and treatment:

100% were 'happy' or 'very happy' with the helpfulness of team members
92% were 'happy' or 'very happy' with where the appointments took place
97% were 'happy' or 'very happy' that the professionals they saw listened to them
100% were 'happy' or 'very happy' that they were treated well by the professionals
97% were 'happy' or 'very happy' that their views/worries were taken seriously
99% were 'happy' or 'very happy' with the overall treatment they received

For the very few 'unhappy' responses, patients reported once again on practical aspects of where their appointment took place, such as the venue being too bright, noisy or warm.



Suggestions for improvement

When asked what should be included, patients that responded requested:

1. *More information on diet and nutrition:* Diet is covered in the programme, and staff recommend a general healthy diet based on current evidence.
2. *More breaks:* Starting September 2019, BCFS will include 5 minutes of restorative rehabilitation or 'breaks' every 35-40 minutes during the group sessions.
3. *Equal weighting between mindfulness and relaxation:* Starting September 2019 BCFS will increase the amount of relaxation, stretching and breathing to match that of mindfulness on the programme. This will be incorporated into the 5 minute restorative rehabilitation breaks.

Patient comments

"Really enjoyed taking part - the facilitation is excellent, very articulate, helpful and practical advice. My health has improved considerably and I intended to carry on using the techniques."

"I found the whole course very informative, supportive and it was great meeting other people with the same condition. This has been a very positive experience for me."

"Just thanks, I feel lucky that I have been offered this service, hope it can continue to help other people too, it's really valuable."

"Thank you so much for organising this and enabling me to be part of it - can't tell you how much it has helped me to meet others with the same condition and receive practical advice and support, I'm feeling so much more positive about my diagnosis, and now feel like I can take steps to improve my quality of life/condition."

Contact us:

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.
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