

Occupational Therapy in POPS (Perioperative care for Older People undergoing Surgery)

Information for patients from Occupational Therapy

This leaflet explains more about the POPS service. If after reading it you have any further questions, please speak to the staff caring for you or ask for a copy of the Trust's **Perioperative Care for Older People Undergoing Surgery** leaflet.

What is Occupational Therapy?

Occupational Therapy aims to improve your ability to do everyday activities (including looking after yourself or your home, getting out and about, and doing the things you enjoy).

How can an occupational therapist help me?

An occupational therapist will consider your strengths, what you are able to do, and what your health care needs are. They will find out what you want and need to be able to do and then consider if your environment (where you live or work) supports or stops you being able to do those things.



The therapist can then find ways to make your life easier and support you to manage your daily tasks and activities. This might include support with looking after yourself, household chores, getting out and about, changes to your home, or taking part in social and leisure activities.

Occupational Therapy can help you with practical tasks if you:

- are physically disabled
- are recovering from an illness or operation
- have memory/mental health problems
- are getting frailer.

The occupational therapist will aim to see how safely and easily you are managing within your daily life. They can suggest things that could help you to become safer and more independent, as well as supporting you to make any lifestyle changes needed to help prepare for your operation and recovery afterwards.

These could include the following.

- Providing equipment (bathing aids, wheelchairs, or furniture raisers).
- Organising home adaptations (rails, ramps, home sensors or modifications).
- Teaching or suggesting new ways of doing everyday tasks (for example the use of long handled aids) or set up activities to make things easier for you.
- Assess your memory and discussing any difficulties you might have due to memory problems. The therapist will then give practical advice on how to manage things at home.
- Giving advice on how to save your energy or simplify tasks to get the most out of your day, and manage your pain, fatigue (tiredness), and breathlessness.
- Giving information, education, and support to you and your carers or family on how to access community support, if needed.

- How to promote your wellbeing and help with making lifestyle changes to support your health and prepare for any planned surgery.

The occupational therapist may refer you on to other services in your local community, for example community physiotherapy.

How can I meet with the POPS occupational therapist?

You will have a clinic appointment with the POPS consultant and clinical nurse specialist. During this appointment you may have discussed any concerns you have about how you are currently managing with your daily life, or if you have decided to have surgery how you will manage at home after your operation.

The POPS consultant can refer you to the occupational therapist after your clinic appointment. The occupational therapist will then contact you by telephone to discuss your health care needs and, if needed, arrange to meet you at your home to discuss these issues. You might find it helpful to have someone (a friend, carer, or relative) with you when the therapist visits your home, for support.

What happens after the occupational therapist has assessed me?

The occupational therapist will agree with you your priorities and create a treatment plan and recommendations to support you. Nothing will be decided without your consent. The length of time you will be supported by the occupational therapist will depend on your condition and your treatment. If you have any questions about this, please speak to the occupational therapist.

The therapist will let you, your GP, and any other care provider know (with your consent) what was decided at your assessment. If you have decided to have surgery the occupational therapist will also speak with the ward-based therapy team, especially if you will need care after your surgery or further therapy after your operation. The ward therapists will continue to assess and manage your rehabilitation and discharge planning after your operation.

What if I have any problems with the changes that the occupational therapist has made?

If you have concerns or questions about any of the suggestions the occupational therapist has made, or if the changes to your home are not helping you, please let your therapist know. These changes are meant to help you and can be changed or removed if you wish.

Contact details

If you have any questions about this service or your treatment plan, please contact the POPS Team on 01227 78 30 43. Leave a message if needed and the occupational therapists will call you back.

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients

If you would like this information in **another language, audio, Braille, Easy Read, or large print** please ask a member of staff. You can ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

Any complaints, comments, concerns, or compliments please speak to your doctor or nurse, or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01227 78 31 45, or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Patients should not bring in large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property had been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals web site www.ekhufft.nhs.uk/patientinformation

Information produced by Occupational Therapy

Date: November 2021

Review date: March 2025

Web 579