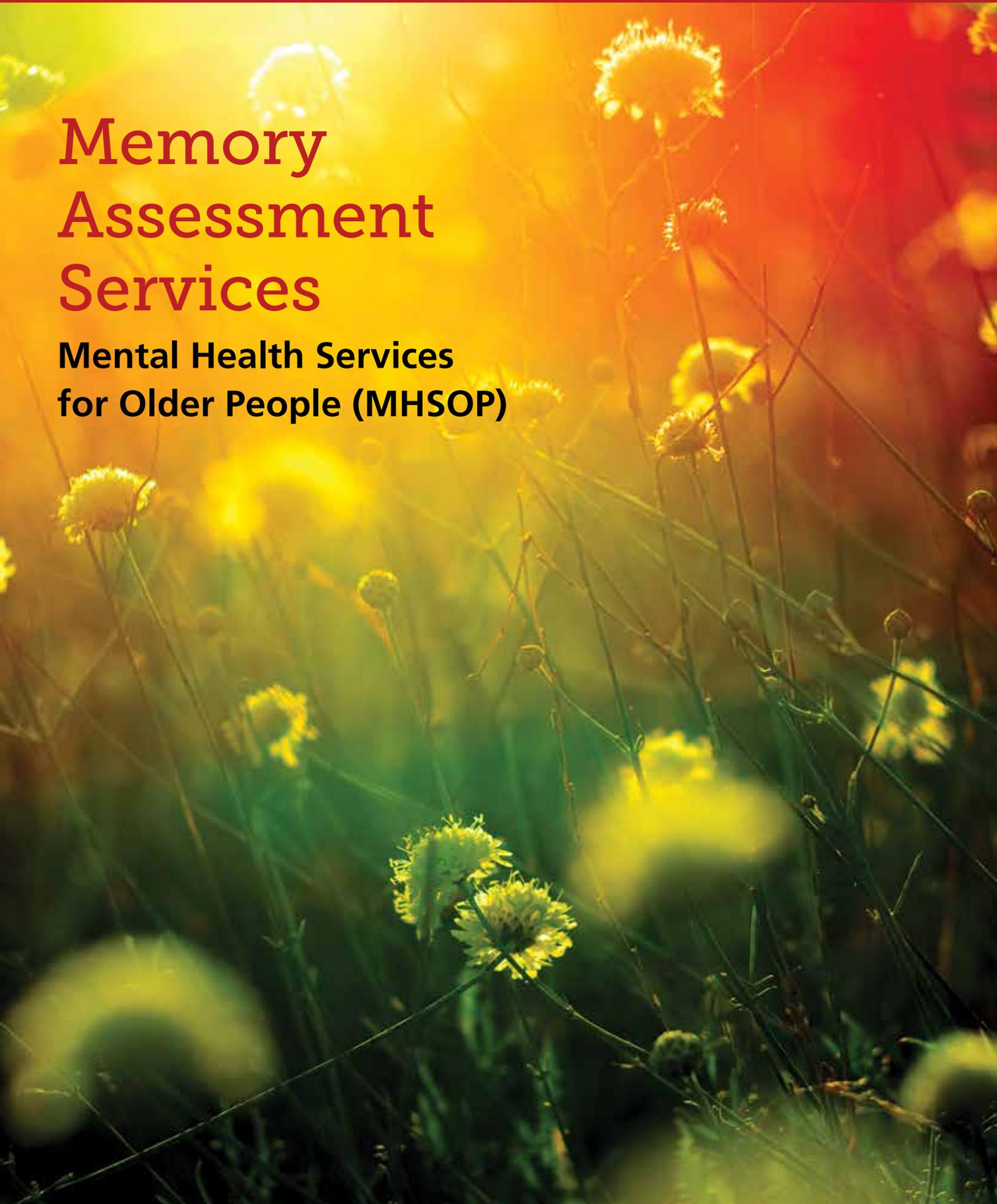


# Memory Assessment Services

**Mental Health Services  
for Older People (MHSOP)**



# Memory Assessment Service

## Mental Health Services for Older People (MHSOP)

It's normal to become a bit forgetful as you get older. However, memory loss could be a symptom of something more serious.

Memory loss occurs when a person loses the ability to remember events and information they would normally be able to recall. This could be something that happened only seconds or minutes ago, or a memorable event that happened in the past. The memory loss may have started suddenly or may have been getting worse over the last year or so.

Memory loss can be distressing, for the person affected as well as for their family. Memory loss can be the sign of a physical condition, depression or may be a sign of dementia.

### What is Dementia?

Dementia is a common condition that affects approximately 800,000 people in the UK. Dementia is a syndrome (a group of related symptoms) associated with an ongoing decline of the brain and its abilities. This includes problems with memory loss, thinking speed, mental agility, language, understanding and judgement.

Dementia is progressive, which means the symptoms will gradually get worse. How fast dementia progresses will depend on the individual person and what type of dementia they have. Each person is unique and will experience dementia in their own way. It is often the case that the person's family and friends are more concerned about the symptoms than the person may be themselves.



## National Dementia Strategy and Memory Assessment Services:

**Objective 2: Good quality early diagnosis and intervention for all.**

The strategy recommends a number of steps to be taken to ensure that all people with dementia have access to a pathway of care that delivers:

- A rapid and competent specialist assessment
- An accurate diagnosis, sensitively communicated to the person with dementia and their carers
- Treatment, care and support provided as needed following diagnosis
- Capacity to see all new cases of dementia in the area

## How can the Memory Assessment Service help?

Our memory assessment services offer good quality, early diagnosis for people experiencing memory problems and dementia. Each team is nurse-led, working closely with doctors and other members of a wider multi-disciplinary team. In the past, only doctors could prescribe medication, but now specially trained health professionals such as nurses can prescribe medicines. These health professionals are called 'non medical prescribers'. Although there is currently no cure for dementia there are treatments that can be used to improve symptoms or temporarily slow down their progression, these will be explained to you at your appointment.

## Referrals

Referrals are received directly from GPs. Patients must:

- Be aged 65+
- Have no previous diagnosis of dementia given

## Working Age Dementia Service

Memory problems and dementia can affect anyone at any age. For people below 65 years of age who are experiencing memory difficulty, the service operates a dementia diagnostic service. Referrals are accepted from GPs and from hospital specialists.

For further information please contact:  
Tracey Evans, Consultant Occupational Therapist  
Working Age Dementia Service  
General Management Suite  
76 Portland Street  
Kirkby-in-Ashfield  
Nottinghamshire NG17 7AG.  
Tel: 0115 956 0884  
Email: [tracey.evans@nottshc.nhs.uk](mailto:tracey.evans@nottshc.nhs.uk)



## What will happen at my appointment?

Following a referral from your GP, an initial appointment will be arranged where a full assessment will take place. We always encourage people to be accompanied by a family member or friend if possible. The assessment will include discussing your current memory issues, past physical health history and your ability to carry out day to day activities. We will also carry out a memory test which will look at attention, memory, language, learning and recall.

Research shows that memory tests may not be culturally appropriate for all of our service users from black and minority communities and this is taken into consideration throughout the assessment process. Should you require an interpreter for your assessment, please inform us of this prior to your appointment so this can be arranged.

Following your initial appointment, you may be offered further investigations such as an ECG (recording of the heart) or brain scan of the head to help with diagnosis. A follow up appointment will take place where the findings of our assessments will be discussed with you. Assessments are tailored to the needs of the individual.

## Where are services provided?

Clinics take place in community locations across the following areas:

### **Bassetlaw**

Tel: 01909 502 408

### **Mansfield and Ashfield**

Tel: 01623 403 278

### **Rushcliffe**

Tel: 0115 883 7417

### **Nottingham City**

Tel: 0115 955 5419

### **Broxtowe**

Tel: 0115 956 0813

### **Newark and Sherwood**

Tel: 0115 876 0155

### **Gedling and Hucknall**

Tel: 0115 956 0823



## Carer/service user statements

I am writing to thank you for the warmth and consideration you showed us when we attended to get the results of Mum's scan and memory test. Mum was very reluctant to attend the appointment but both she and Dad said several times afterwards how lovely you had been.

From the initial assessment the team were very courteous, considerate and reassuring. Throughout the assessment, my mother appreciated their patience and willingness to explain things to her. She left far less anxious than she arrived! We are all very grateful to the team.



## How to access the Memory Assessment Service

After an initial consultation with your GP has taken place, a referral will be made by them to your nearest Memory Assessment Service. You will then be contacted by letter or telephone offering an initial appointment.

### Partnership working

Local memory assessment services work in partnership with local GP practices and dementia support workers from the Alzheimer's Society to fully support service users and their carers from initial assessment through to the diagnosis process. Dementia support workers can offer support and advice on issues such as driving with dementia, employment and benefits.

### Alzheimer's Society support at memory assessment clinics

People attending the memory assessment clinics are able to access support from the Alzheimer's Society who have a worker in attendance in each clinic. This support takes the format of a one to one appointment directly after diagnosis, and provides both general and tailored information for the person with dementia and their carer. The dementia support worker can discuss the diagnosis, provide information about Power of Attorney, guidance on accessing benefits and details of local support groups available, how to access carers assessments and adult social care amongst other topics. This ensures that once the person has left the clinic they have a point of contact within the voluntary sector to provide any further information or advice.

### Recommended reading

There are a number of self-help books about dementia available from libraries across the county.

Your local Memory Assessment Service can provide you with a list of books and libraries.

### Research

Nottinghamshire Healthcare is actively involved with research projects about dementia. We may ask you if you wish to participate in research projects. Involvement would of course be completely optional and everything would be fully explained beforehand.

