

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King’s Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Cognitive Screen Information

While you have been in hospital, your stroke therapy team completed a cognitive screen (Oxford Cognitive Screen) with you to find out if you are having any difficulties with areas of cognition.

Cognition is the way your brain understands, organises and stores information. Problems with cognition are very common after a stroke.

Included in the screen is a brief summary of the findings from this task. This gives an overview of your cognition at the specific time the tasks were done.

It is worth noting that cognition can vary over time and in different settings. There is also a breakdown of things you or your family and friends may notice when you begin to return to completing everyday tasks, and strategies you can try that may help manage these.

It is important to remember that everyone presents in different ways after a stroke, with varying degrees of difficulties experienced.

The information is aimed to help you make sense of things you might experience, which could be a result of cognitive difficulties after stroke.

Areas for you to be aware of are highlighted in the diagram on the following page.

Additional information specifically for you:

Attention

With sustained attention (concentration), you may not be able to:

- Concentrate on a conversation in a noisy room.
- Process things quickly.
- Stay focused on a task.

Try to:

- Focus on one task at a time.
- Remove distractions.
- Prioritise tasks for the day to focus on what is important.

Number processing

You may find it difficult to:

- Write/type numbers.
- Recognise numbers on a telephone.
- Complete number calculations to give correct money in a shop or when looking at personal finances.

Try to:

- Organise help with finances.
- Use visual tools to help recognise people on your phone- have them in speed dial.

Language

You might have problems with:

- Reading and understanding written information.
- Forming letters, spelling words, or writing words in the right order.
- Speaking and being understood.

Let people know you find this difficult - once they understand this, they are likely to try and adapt their approach and try to help. Ask people to slow down and avoid other distractions when communicating.

Picture formats may help alongside written information.

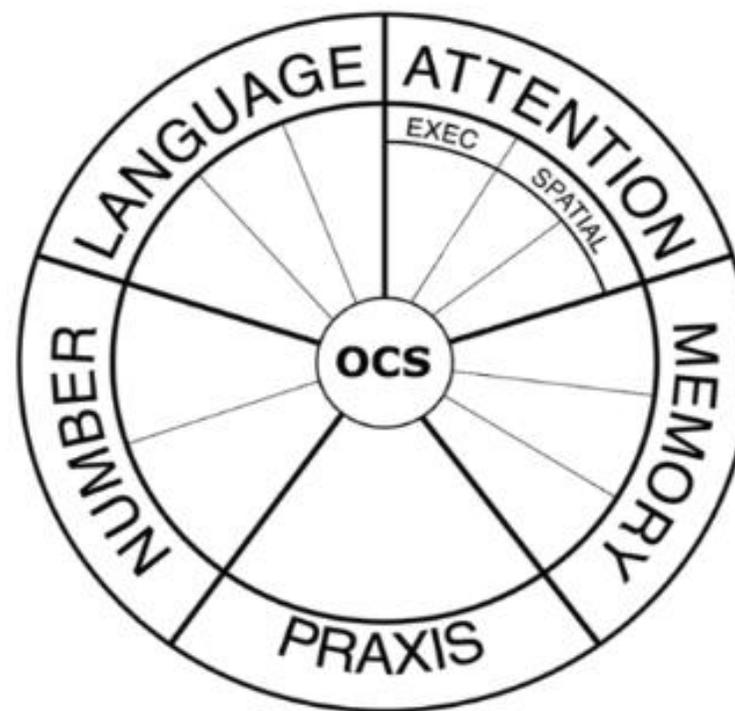
Cognitive problems are usually worse during the first few months after a stroke, but they can improve with time when returning to more familiar environment or routines, and with practice.

Things that help you manage your cognitive difficulties are known as compensation or coping strategies, some of which are included in this booklet.

Should you wish to discuss these further, the Occupational Therapist involved in your care is:

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Please ask to speak to the therapist on the ward, or if you have recently been discharged, please call 01623 622515, extension 4679.



Information and advice about highlighted areas is on the following pages.

Visuospatial

Visuospatial abilities refer to the way you relate visual information to the space around you. A stroke can damage your brain so that it no longer receives this information from one side of your body. If this happens, you may not be aware of anything on one side. This can present as:

- Missing things that are placed on your affected side.
- Ignoring people without realising or bumping into things.
- Eating food from only one side of your plate or only reading one side of a page in a book.

Try to:

- Have someone with you when moving around. This is particularly important when mobilising in busy environments or when outside.
- Have someone prompt you to scan your plate to ensure you have eaten all your meal.
- Use a visual prompt to scan for the edge of a page in a book.

Memory

You may experience:

- Forgetting things that have just happened (short-term memory). For example, what someone just said to you or what you were about to do.
- Forgetting important dates, or someone's name or what they told you last time you met (long-term memory).
- Having difficulty recalling where you are and the day, date, year (orientation).

Try to:

- Use a diary to plan your day to remind you of important tasks/dates.
- Keep a diary log of tasks completed as you do them, so you know if you have already completed.
- Keep notes after you have spoken to someone, e.g., a doctor's appointment so you know what was said.

Executive skills

These include planning, organising and problem solving. It may be difficult to:

- Plan how to complete a task.
- Think of all the steps that are needed to do something, such as making a cup of tea or planning your day.
- Realise that you need to do something, like get dressed, until someone tells you, or you may need someone to prompt you throughout a task to help you to complete it.
- Work out what to do if something goes wrong.
- Switch between task or do more than one thing at a time.

Try to:

- Practice specific tasks over again in a familiar environment, e.g., making a cup of tea.
- Use prompts and reminders, e.g., use written or visual instructions for specific tasks.
- It can help to talk through a task with someone before you do it, so that you can think of and plan the steps needed.

- Keep to a keep a visual daily/weekly planner to help prompt you to complete a task.

Praxis

This is the ability to perform skilled movements required for activities. You may find you are:

- Doing activities in the wrong order or missing stages.
- Difficulty using objects correctly, e.g., using a comb as a toothbrush.
- Exerting the wrong amount of force, so you may bang your mug on the table when you go to put it down.
- Making errors when completing gestures, like moving your hand forwards and backwards to wave, rather than side to side.

Try to:

- Do activities in a familiar environment at an appropriate time of day.
- Do activities in the same order and environment to familiarise.
- Use written or visual cue cards to prompt at each stage.
- Visually imagine a movement before attempting it.