



INSTITUTE OF CHILD HEALTH

Great Ormond Street 
Hospital for Children
NHS Foundation Trust

The Mildred Creak Unit

Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust
Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3JH

020 7829 8679 (Direct line)

020 7829 8657 (Fax)

Mildred Creak Unit: Information for Referrers

This leaflet provides information about the Mildred Creak Unit at Great Ormond Street Hospital for referring doctors. The Mildred Creak Unit is named after the hospital's first child psychiatrist and is an in-patient psychiatric unit for seven to fourteen year olds. We have ten beds available on the unit and we accept children with a range of behavioural and emotional difficulties. We have a special interest and expertise in treating children with somatoform disorders and eating disorders but accept referrals for children with a wide range of psychiatric conditions. As a paediatric hospital we do not treat children detained under the Mental Health Act. The proximity of paediatric services enables us to manage co-morbid medical problems. We are also able to use up to two of our inpatient beds for day patients where clinically appropriate. The MCU was recently 'Accredited with Excellence' by QNIC at the Royal College of Psychiatrists (July 2014), one of a small number of units nationally to have achieved this distinction.

Referrals

Referrals should be sent in writing to the Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Mildred Creak Unit. We accept referrals from Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists in Tier 3 CAMHS services, and also from Consultant Paediatricians within Great Ormond Street Hospital. Dr Jon Goldin, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, is happy to discuss cases on the telephone prior to the decision to refer. We have a fortnightly referral meeting, where referrals are discussed by our team and a senior team member is allocated to liaise with the referrer. If the referral is for a patient with an eating disorder, it should be addressed to Dr Dasha Nicholls, Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, in the first instance. We do not have a referral form as such but need a detailed letter from the referrer outlining the background to the referral, history and proposed aims of admission. We are a nationally commissioned service and can accept children from across the UK. For referrals from outside London, prior funding approval is required. More details regarding this process are available from Dr Goldin but essentially the local Case Manager from NHS England needs to be aware of and support each referral.

Before the admission

Ideally, a consultation is arranged locally initially with the referrer/family, and if admission seems likely, the child and family will come to meet members of the MCU team at Great Ormond Street Hospital. Sometimes the initial meeting is at Great Ormond Street, in which case it is helpful if the referrer is also able to attend. A visit to the unit is also arranged before the admission, and, where appropriate and possible, a home visit.

The initial six weeks of an admission focuses on assessment of the child's difficulties. During this time we will consider whether a longer-term admission is appropriate. This will be a joint decision involving the Mildred Creak Unit team, the referring team and the child and family.

About the Mildred Creak Unit

The unit is open seven days a week, although we encourage children to spend weekends at home with their family or carers. Based in a major paediatric hospital setting, the unit is particularly well placed to take on paediatric liaison cases that require in-patient psychiatric treatment. We are therefore one of the few children's in-patient units equipped to take children with significant medical problems as well as mental health disorders. We have regular input from a Consultant Paediatrician on the unit and liaise regularly with paediatric colleagues where appropriate. Although we have a particular interest in somatoform disorders, we treat a wide range of child psychiatric conditions including mood disorders, eating disorders, psychotic disorders, attachment disorders and pervasive developmental disorders.

About the team

We work as a multidisciplinary team comprising child and adolescent psychiatrists, nurses, therapeutic care workers, teachers, a family therapist, a child and adolescent psychotherapist, a clinical psychologist, a social worker, a physiotherapist and a dietician. We also have access to occupational therapy and speech therapy as required. Our nurses come from a range of backgrounds encompassing both mental health and paediatric training.

Treatment

The treatment plan is individually designed according to the individual needs of the child and family. We provide a therapeutic milieu on the unit and within this framework, an eclectic treatment programme is delivered. Available treatment includes individual and group psychotherapies, family therapy, pharmacotherapy and a range of creative therapies. An individual education plan is implemented for each child. During the course of the admission, a regular written update is sent to the family, referrer, and relevant professionals. In addition, full admission and discharge summaries are prepared and sent to the referrer, family, GP and others as appropriate.

Urgent referrals and emergencies

We are generally not able to accept emergency admissions, but we do respond as quickly as possible to all referrals, usually within 24 hours. We do not admit patients 'out of hours' but where a bed is available, and it is clinically appropriate, we are able to admit patients within 48 hours of receiving the referral. Cases are prioritised in discussion with the referrer.

Informal enquiries

If you wish to discuss a case before deciding whether to refer, please contact

Dr Jon Goldin
Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist
Mildred Creak Unit, Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust
London WC1N 3JH

Tel: 020 7829 8679 Fax: 020 7813 8411

