



## What is a cognitive assessment?

A cognitive assessment (sometimes called a 'neuropsychological assessment') involves completing a range of tasks and puzzles designed to assess different thinking skills including attention, memory, problem-solving, and executive functioning. A cognitive assessment can also look at changes in mood, personality or behaviour that can occur in the context of acute or chronic neurological conditions.

## Why do I need a cognitive assessment?

The pattern of performance on a neuropsychological assessment can be useful to:

- Help determine the impact of your brain injury, stroke, or progressive neurological condition
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses in your thinking skills
- Provide information to your medical doctor to help with diagnosis (for example, in the context of dementia) Provide evidence for assessments of mental capacity to decide on important decisions like appointing an LPA, choosing nursing or residential accommodation, consenting to intimate relationships, or making a Will
- Understand the impact of any brain injury or neurological condition on everyday life
- Provide valuable information for employers or occupational health assessors to support with reasonable adjustments at work or medical retirement
- Monitor your recovery
- Help to plan treatment, care packages or further cognitive rehabilitation
- Provide a baseline to allow comparison over time with future assessments

In some cases, you might not have a formal neurological diagnosis but you have noticed changes in your thinking skills. A cognitive assessment can help to either confirm your observations or to provide reassurance. It can also form part of a holistic 'wellness check' in conjunction with an assessment of mood, fatigue, and sleep.

## What happens during a cognitive assessment?

Before the cognitive assessment, you will be asked to complete some questionnaires about your mood, thinking skills, and level of functional activity. This provides important background information about what might be contributing to or aggravating any cognitive changes.

The cognitive assessment can take between 3 to 4 hours to complete, with a short break if required. At the beginning of the appointment, the neuropsychologist will spend some time

discussing with you any concerns that you may have about your thinking abilities, mood or behaviour. We will also review your medical, psychological and school history.

### **Do I need to bring anything with me to a cognitive assessment?**

If you usually wear glasses for everyday activities or for reading, make sure you bring them with you. Also, please make sure you are wearing your hearing aids, if you need them.

If you have them, it is helpful to bring along any relevant medical letters or reports. This may include report from previous cognitive assessments that you may have completed.

### **Do I need to prepare anything for the cognitive assessment?**

You don't need to prepare anything in particular but you will get the most out of the assessment if you try to do the following:

- Get a good night's sleep the night before the assessment
- Wear comfortable clothes because you will be sitting in a chair for a number of hours
- Take any regular medication as normal (unless specifically asked not to by your neuropsychologist)
- Eat a good breakfast – undertaking a cognitive assessment on an empty stomach is not recommended!
- Have water or another drink on hand during the assessment to stay hydrated

### **Should I bring someone with me to the cognitive assessment?**

It is helpful to bring someone you know well to the assessment. You will be asked some questions about your thinking skills and day to day activities and it can be helpful to have another person's point of view. Once the testing starts, the neuropsychologist will ask the person you are with to wait outside, but if you need them to stay, please let the neuropsychologist know.

### **After your appointment**

The neuropsychologist will analyse your results and compile a comprehensive report of the findings with tailored recommendations. This will be sent to you and, should you request, can also be forwarded to the other professionals involved in your care.

Follow-up sessions to discuss the report findings and / or to provide interventions such as cognitive aids are available on request.

### **What if I can't make my appointment?**

Resilience Neuro operates a standard two working-day cancellation policy for cognitive assessments. If an assessment is cancelled with less than two working days' notice, the assessment will still be charged in full. However, we understand that sometimes unforeseen events can happen so please contact us as soon as possible to discuss whether your assessment can be rescheduled instead.

*Please see terms and conditions for more details.*