

Take the first steps for your physical health

If you have a severe mental illness (SMI) you are entitled to an annual physical health check.

You have a severe mental illness if you have a diagnosis of schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar affective disorder or other psychoses. People on lithium medication are also entitled to this review.

Some aspects of living with SMI mean that people are more likely to develop physical health problems.

Everyone's situation is different, but we know that good mental and physical health go hand in hand.

A full health check is an important first step towards taking ownership of your physical health.



What is a physical health check?

People living with SMI are at a greater risk of developing health conditions such as diabetes, stroke or heart problems. The annual physical health check is really important to help to detect any issues as early as possible and help you access the support you might need.

At your physical health check you should expect the following:

- **Blood pressure** – your blood pressure will be checked.
- **Electrocardiogram (ECG)** - a simple test to check your heart's rhythm and electrical activity.
- **Blood glucose** – a blood sample will be taken for a blood test, where the level of glucose (sugar) in your blood will be checked.
- **Height and weight** – your height and weight will be measured.
- **Blood lipid** – a blood sample will be taken for a blood test, where the level of cholesterol in your blood will be checked.
- **Smoking** – you will be asked whether you smoke.
- **Alcohol** - you will be asked how much alcohol you drink.
- **Screening and immunisation programmes** – you will be asked if you have taken part in these programmes.
- **Medication review** - your medication will be reviewed and changes made if necessary.
- **You'll also be asked other questions about your general health.**





Who will do my physical health check?

All people with SMI who are being supported by North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust will receive their physical health check from us.

You will be invited to an initial appointment where you will have your physical health checks completed.

When the results are available, you will have a second appointment to discuss these and we will work with you to complete your physical health check and discuss the next steps.

What happens after my physical health check?

Receiving a physical health check should only be the start of your journey towards taking ownership of your health and wellbeing. Any issues identified will be discussed between you and your health professional and together we will develop a plan about what to do next. Depending on the arrangements in your area, you may be able to access follow-up support such as exercise schemes, weight management support, cooking classes, dietary advice, support to stop smoking or to drink less alcohol, as well as support around budgeting.



I'm ready - how do I get my physical health check?

You will be offered a routine appointment for this or you can speak to your mental health worker and ask them to arrange this through the SMI Physical Health Team.

I need help from an interpreter

If you need an interpreter to support you, please let us know as soon as possible and we will arrange this. An interpreter will be provided free of charge.

Let us know your feedback!

If you have any feedback on the physical health check service, please let us know online at www.combined.nhs.uk/working-together/friends-and-family-test-online-form/ or by using the QR code on the right to access the online form. You can also contact the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) on Tel: 01782 275031, Freephone: 0800 389 9676, Email: patientexperienceteam@combined.nhs.uk

