

General Information

Deancross is open Monday–Friday from 9am to 5pm, with the exception of Bank and Public Holidays when we are closed.

There is no out of hours service and we are not a crisis service and so all patients in treatment have a crisis and contingency plan.

There are no childcare facilities.

We do not have a Social Worker in the staff team. If patients need assistance with benefits or housing issues for example, they can speak with a member of the team to hear about other available services for assistance.

How to Find DeanCross:



Stepney Green and Mile End Tube Stations (10 minutes walk)

Buses: 25, 205 (access from Mile End Road)

339 (access from Earnest Street)

277 425 D6 (access from Mile End Station, Grove Road)

DeanCross

Tower Hamlets Personality Disorder Service

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275 Bancroft Road London E1 4DG

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East London **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

DeanCross



An Introduction

Information for potential patients, referrers,
carers and other interested groups

The aim of this leaflet is to provide an overview of the service offered by DeanCross. The information here is designed to give potential patients, referrers, carers and other interested groups a greater understanding of the service we provide.



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9. We are obliged to inform the Social Services Department if we have reason to believe children or vulnerable adults may be at risk from an identified person. We will discuss with patients any situation where we think this may be relevant, and we will not tell anyone without the patient being told first. We will not tell family members, the police or other anything patients don't want them to know except in situations where we have a legal duty to do so. We would normally work with patients even in these situations to get their agreement as to how and when information is given out.
10. Very intimate relationships, sexual relationships, or friendships between patients outside of their programme tend to disrupt therapy and are therefore strongly discouraged. Nevertheless, if there is any contact amongst members outside of the service it is important to avoid talking about the work that takes place in therapy, and bring any type of outside contact back into the work at Deancross.



4. We do not consider self-harming behaviour to be an appropriate or useful way of dealing with challenging feelings. We understand that patterns of self-harming behaviour can be difficult to break, however, continuing severe self-harming behaviours can disrupt therapy. In order for therapy to work, patients need to be open about their own or someone else's self-harming behaviour, or plans or impulses to engage in any self-defeating behaviours. Patients are encouraged to tell the group if they become aware of a risk of any sort to themselves or to another. Keeping this type of behaviour secret is dangerous and destructive to everyone's ability to use the programmes effectively.
5. No alcohol or drugs other than prescribed medication should be brought onto the unit. If we have reason to believe someone is in possession of, or is supplying others with an illegal substance, we will inform the police. It is not acceptable to be under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol while attending the unit. Intoxication with drugs or alcohol makes it harder to regulate feelings and increases vulnerability to self-harm and aggressive behaviour. It also makes it impossible to use the therapy effectively. If someone is thought to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs on a day they attend Deancross, they will be asked to leave for the rest of the day and come back the next time their programme is running to discuss this behaviour. No drug screens are done.
6. Attendance and punctuality are necessary at all planned days and groups. Patients are expected to attend all group sessions on days their programme is running, and if they are late for the first session in the day they need to follow particular procedures that are explained in detail in the programme's guidelines.
7. Any holidays or time away should be planned and negotiated in advance with the programme, as time away from the service can have a serious impact on therapy for self and others.
8. Programme membership means a commitment to attend all sessions, meetings and reviews.

Introduction to DeanCross

DeanCross is a part of the East London NHS Foundation Trust and was established in 2008 as a service specifically intended to support adults living in Tower Hamlets who experience serious emotional difficulties which have a significant impact on their day-to-day lives. The service can be useful for people who frequently experience intense and difficult emotions, perhaps with sudden and extreme swings in mood states and feelings. People who use the service may also struggle with frequent feelings of emptiness and difficulties identifying a sense of self. All of these emotional problems may then lead to difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships, which keep breaking down. In day-to-day life, lack of confidence and low self-esteem may be a problem, and impulsiveness can also be a common difficulty. People may use self-harm, alcohol or drug misuse or food as a way to manage these difficult emotions, and it can become difficult to break out of using this pattern of behaviours. One term that is used to describe this whole pattern of difficulties is "personality disorder", and DeanCross is Tower Hamlets Personality Disorder Service.



What do we offer?

A variety of programmes are offered at DeanCross to provide an opportunity for patients to work with each other and with staff, in a joint attempt to identify and understand emotions in the present. With support, patients are encouraged to think about how their current difficulties have come about, and the ways in which they may be maintained in day-to-day life. We also think together about alternative ways of managing these difficulties. We believe that the best treatment is through a combination of group psychotherapy with individual sessions to support this work.

At DeanCross, we use a form of psychotherapy which is known as **Mentalization-Based Treatment** or **MBT**, which focuses on supporting patients to explore and understand how they “mentalize”, that is how do they think about, reflect on and understand their feelings and experiences, as well as those of others. In turn, we explore how all of this can link to the problems described earlier. We feel that patients benefit from being in a group with others with similar problems, so that they can see that they are not alone with these problems and because often it can help to learn from watching how others learn. However, some things are difficult to say in a group, so there is some individual work as well.

Referrals and Assessments

Referrals to DeanCross can be made through your community mental health team (CMHT). GPs and other professionals are encouraged to use this single point of entry system, although we do provide some direct support and advice to professionals. We do not accept self-referrals. Once a referral has been received and if it seems that our approach may be helpful, prospective patients will be invited for two or more initial assessment meetings.

At these meetings a member of our team will think with the patient about the difficulties they experience and how they may benefit from the treatment we offer. If it seems that the service may be helpful, and if the patient remains interested in engaging with the service, then a treatment plan will be agreed with the patient, with an emphasis on finding manageable steps into treatment. If for any reason treatment here does not seem helpful, we will think about alternate plans.

Service Guidelines for Safe Psychological Therapy

Psychological work is complex and emotional and, as such, we need to create an atmosphere in which patients feel safe and able to talk about their difficulties. An agreement of how we will all work together is therefore important. The service guidelines given below apply to all of the sessions and programmes at Deancross. They are important in providing a safe and therapeutic working environment. Breach of these guidelines may result in time away or discharge from the service. All new members have the opportunity to discuss the reasons for these guidelines when they join the programme.

1. A significant aspect of the work will be to encourage all patients to express and explore challenging feelings. This exploration needs individuals to respect each other's thoughts and feelings, so that we can make sense of them and find healthy ways to manage how they affect us.
2. Confidentiality within each programme is essential. It is important to remember that patients should not discuss with anyone outside of their programme issues that are raised during therapy. In the event that a patient wishes to talk to someone in their personal life about something that they have been working on in therapy, they need to make sure that they do not mention any other patient's personal details. Any issues which arise within the group are always best discussed within the group setting.
3. Respect at all times for oneself, others and the environment is essential. Violence, damaging property, verbal abuse or threatening behaviour towards others is not an acceptable way for patients to express themselves or communicate with other people in the group.

Psychiatric Aspects of the Service

The role of the medical staff at DeanCross is primarily to work therapeutically with psychological difficulties, assess the presence of any psychiatric disorders and review any psychiatric medication. In order not to confuse roles, it will be important for patients to contact their own GP for help with any physical problems. We offer a comprehensive psychiatric assessment, including a review of diagnoses, for patients on all programmes.

Patients who are taking psychiatric medication will be offered a medication review meeting with one of our doctors and a staff member. These meetings are designed to review medication as part of the overall service offered at DeanCross.

While in therapy, patients may experience challenging and difficult feelings that they struggle to tolerate and contain. We do not believe it is appropriate to prescribe medication which blocks the experience of psychological symptoms that relate to the psychotherapeutic work. The use of medicines like benzodiazepines, for example Diazepam, is discouraged. It is for the same reason that the use of recreational drugs and excessive alcohol is unhelpful for patients attending any of the programmes.

After a patient has been attending DeanCross for approximately three months, it will be important to transfer care from other mental health professionals to our service. This helps to prevent confusion and misunderstanding between different professionals and different forms of treatment. We will also take on responsibility for providing doctor's notes where this is appropriate and necessary.

It is important to note that although Deancross assumes psychiatric responsibility for patients on its programmes, we are not an acute psychiatric service and if patients require such a level of intervention, we may involve another team.



Treatment

DeanCross currently offers different levels of intervention, in order to meet the individual needs of patients. Some of the current programmes on offer are:

[Preparation Group](#)

This is a psycho-educational group to help patients learn about mentalization, personality disorder and issues that may arise in therapy. Each session is for 75 minutes and has a topic. Most patients need at least 8 to 12 sessions before they are ready to move onto a more intensive programme and others may find that this is all they need.

[Once-weekly Groups](#)

These groups help patients learn about mentalization and personality disorder by bringing in issues from their current day to day life or issues happening right then in the group as examples to be explored using mentalization. Each session is for 90 minutes and meets once a week. Patients are initially asked to attend for 10-12 weeks, and thereafter can continue for 18 or 24 months depending on the programme.

Treatment Continued...

Outpatient Programmes

This provides a more intensive intervention, involving a weekly Psychodrama Psychotherapy group and a weekly Psychotherapy group with an individual session fortnightly. Patients will be offered a place on this programme for 18 months, and are expected to attend the both group sessions every week and all individual sessions fortnightly for the entire duration of the programme. The individual sessions for the Outpatient programmes are with a specific clinician and the focus of the work is related directly to the work in the groups and goals identified at regular reviews.

All patients attending an 18 month programme have a regular review and a care plan, although not all patients require the full Care Plan Approach. Part of our work is also to meet the families, friends and carers of patients attending the service, where this seems appropriate and agreed with the patient.

East London NHS Foundation Trust provides training opportunities for clinical staff and there are various training posts at DeanCross for psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, nurses and other professions.

Indirect Working

A key part of our role is to support other service providers who may be involved in a patient's care, and on request, we can also consult to local services even if a direct referral has not been made to Dean-Cross. We are also able to provide on request bespoke trainings to teams and professionals on working with personality disorder to support their work with clients with this pattern of difficulties.

Other Concurrent Therapy

If patients are currently in treatment with other professionals or therapists, we would ask them to discuss this at the initial meetings, so that we can work out a plan about the best way of organising treatment overall. We would also ask for any such information to be included in referral letters. Normally, we would discourage patients' engagement in other psychological therapy once they begin attending the service.

