Ellern Mede

Ellern Mede
Eating disorder treatment brochure

Specialists in eating disorders and complex care

Introduction

Ellern Mede Group provides specialist inpatient care for children, young people, and adults with complex mental health needs. We have particular expertise in eating disorders and related difficulties, including trauma, emotional dysregulation, and neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism. Across all our sites, our experienced teams work closely with each person and their family, using individualised, formulation-led care to support long-term, sustainable recovery.

Ellern Mede Group has two inpatient services in North London which can provide specialist eating disorder treatment:

Ellern Mede Ridgeway- a specialist inpatient CAMHS service for young people with eating disorders and related complex needs in Mill Hill. This service offers 28 inpatient beds for young people aged 8 to 18 years old across three wards, Lask ward, Nunn ward and the Cottage.

Ellern Mede Barnet- a specialist inpatient service for adults with eating disorders and related complex needs in Barnet. This service offers 14 inpatient beds for adults over 18 across three wards, Ash ward, Rowan ward and the Annex.

Philosophy of Care

At Ellern Mede, our approach is grounded in compassion, collaboration, and respect for each individual's journey. We aim to build trust with both patients and their families, creating a therapeutic environment where they feel safe, supported, and empowered.

Our care goes beyond treating symptoms - we focus on nurturing long-term resilience and wellbeing, helping individuals reclaim a sense of agency, hope, and purpose in their lives.

Admission Criteria

- Age 8 - 18 years for our CAMHS wards and age 18+ for our adult wards.
- Diagnosis of an eating disorder and related conditions, including disordered eating.
- Informal or Detained under the Mental Health Act.
- Eating disorders not otherwise specified (EDNOS).
- Pervasive Arousal Withdrawal Syndrome (PAWS).
- Complex mental health needs and co-occurring conditions that can be safely managed in an open CAMHS environment.

Referrals and access

We accept NHS referrals from community mental health teams and from those seeking private, self-pay and medical insurance options. Referrals are accepted from all areas, nationally and internationally.

As an independent provider, we work closely with NHS commissioners to deliver contracted services and can also collaborate with other commissioners and private funders to develop bespoke care packages tailored to individual needs.

Education

Ellern Mede Ridgeway has an independent school on site, rated Outstanding by Ofsted four times, providing specialist education for patients up to age 18. The school supports children who cannot attend mainstream school during their treatment due to illness or mental health needs, and is linked to Orange Tree School for those continuing their studies after discharge. Education is funded by the patient’s local authority, and our staff are specialists in delivering care and learning for this group.

Treatment Approach

Our service uses a person-centred, formulation-led approach, meaning care is planned around each individual. Treatment is delivered by a multidisciplinary team and developed in partnership with the patient and, where appropriate, their family and wider support network.

Nutritional rehabiltation and weight restoration are supported from the start of admission alongside a structured therapeutic programme. A shared biopsychosocial formulation helps the team understand the patient's mental and physical health, developmental history, relationships, and life experiences, and how these may affect their difficulties. This understanding guides care throughout treatment and is reviewed regularly as needs change.

Each patient has an individual care plan that supports treatment, safety, and discharge planning. Planned home leave is included where appropriate to help patients practice skills in everyday settings and prepare for a safe transition out of hospital.

Inpatient Programmes
Our inpatient programmes are for patients with severe and complex needs who are unable to make or sustain changes from outpatient treatment. Our pogrammes are focused on recovery and reintegration back into the community. Therapeutic programmes involve intensive family support and family therapy. Our treatment is evidence based and follows NICE guidelines. We also use MEED guidelines in our eating disorder assessments.

We equip both the patient and their family with the tools and coping skills they need to manage the eating disorder in the home environment post discharge.

We offer both standard and High Dependency Units (HDU) and General Eating Disorder Units (GED) depending on the acuity and complexity of the patient's needs.

The General Eating Disorder Programme is suitable for patients who are mentally and physically stable and able to engage in treatment with standard levels of multidisciplinary support.

The High Dependency Programme is for patients with more complex, severe, or long-standing difficulties who require a higher level of support to achieve stability.

All types of feeding intervention can be supported.

Outreach Support
We provide assessment and treatment for children, adults and their families, at our hospital sites, as well as online depending on location and need.

Facilities and environment

All Ellern Mede hospitals provide high-quality accommodation designed to feel welcoming and homely. Facilities across our sites support both treatment and everyday wellbeing, and include:

- Recreation and outdoor spaces, including private gardens
- Communal areas, dining spaces and lounges
- Occupational therapy kitchens and indoor activity spaces
- Sensory rooms and therapy rooms

Accommodation and facilities are designed to support recovery, independence, and family involvement, with step-down areas available to prepare patients for life back in the community

Ellern Mede Ridgeway

- **Capacity:** 28 patients
- **Patient group:** 8-18 years old
- Wards: Lask ward, Nunn ward, The Cottage
- **Environment:** Homely environment with shared bedrooms where patients can personalise their space; communal lounges, dining areas, extensive gardens
- **Therapeutic spaces:** Quiet rooms, activity rooms, music room, OT kitchen, family therapy suite, sensory room, individual therapy rooms
- **Step-down care:** The Cottage provides step-down accommodation to support independence before discharge
- **Access:** Easily reached by public transport; limited visitor parking

Ellern Mede Barnet

- **Capacity:** 14 patients
- **Patient group:** aged 18+
- **Wards:** Ash Ward, Rowan Ward, The Annex
- **Environment:** Bright, modern environment, ensuite bedrooms, communal spaces, Rainbow Lounge dining area and private garden
- **Therapeutic spaces:** Quiet rooms, therapy rooms, OT kitchen, activity room, sensory room
- **Step-down care:** The Annex provides step-down accommodation to support independence before discharge
- **Access:** Easily reached by public transport, with nearby parking

Care Pathway

Personalised support to guide each person’s recovery journey

Referral and assessment

Patients are referred for inpatient care due to severe, complex, or enduring needs. A preadmission meeting is held, and a comprehensive assessment considers their multidisciplinary needs.

Admission and Formulation

Patients are admitted to either the General Eating Disorder or High Dependency Programme. Within the first 6 weeks, a biopsychosocial formulation is completed together to guide personalised treatment planning.

Multi-disciplinary treatment

Structured multidisciplinary care is provided, including medical monitoring, therapies, dietetic support, and risk management. Regular reviews and goal-setting ensure progress towards recovery. MDT reviews are held weekly and CPA reviews are held every 4-6 weeks.

Community reintegration

Gradual community reintegration starts with supervised time in the community and progresses to extended home leave. This allows patients and their families to practise skills, build confidence, and prepare for life beyond hospital.

Discharge and step-down support

Collaborative discharge planning ensures a smooth transition to outpatient or community care. Patients and families are supported throughout, with community teams engaged to maintain recovery and safety.

The Multi-disciplinary team

We have a specialist multidisciplinary team working closely together under the experienced leadership of our Medical Director and Clinical Operations Director

The multi-disciplinary team consists of:

- Hospital Manager
- Consultant Psychiatrist
- Speciality Doctors and Ward doctors
- Clinical Psychologists
- Assistant Psychologists
- Family Therapists
- Specialist pharmacist
- Physiotherapist
- Autism Lead and Autism Champion
- Speech and language therapist
- Social Workers
- Dietetic Team
- Psychotherapist
- Art therapist
- Activity Coordinators
- Occupational Therapist
- Specialist Nurses
- Therapeutic Support workers
- Healthcare Support workers

Dr Hind Al-Khairulla

Consultant Psychiatrist & Medical Director

Dr Hind has over 20 years' experience in psychiatry, with a special interest in eating disorders. Working in partnership with the senior management team she leads the multi-disciplinary team and is passionate about never giving up on any patient.

Nancy Maicoo

Clinical Operations Director

Nancy has over 20 years' experience as a senior nurse manager. She has managed inpatient and outpatient eating disorder services in both NHS and independent sectors. Nancy is also the designated Safeguarding Lead and Nominated Indiviudal for Ellern Mede.

Therapeutic programmes

Ellern Mede offers a wide range of individual and group therapies delivered by our multidisciplinary team. Each approach is tailored to the patient's needs and stage of treatment. Therapies include, but are not limited to:

- Family Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) (including CBT-E and CBT-T)
- Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT)
- Motivational Interviewing
- Psycho-education Therapy
- Dialectic Behavioural Therapy (DBT)
- Art Therapy
- Integrative Psychotherapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech and language therapy

Family Support and coaching
Our experienced family therapists work closely with families to foster healthy communication, restore balance within the home, and support recovery. Family involvement and group support are central to our approach, and programmes are tailored to meet individual needs.

A key part of recovery is the support offered by social workers and dieticians, who help patients and families develop practical skills, manage challenges, and apply strategies learned in therapy to everyday life.

Groups
We provide group sessions and activities which support individual therapies. Groups include:
• Psychology groups (various programmes and topics)
• Body image Group
• Process Group
• Mindfulness
• Future Focus
• Social Eating Group
• Weekly Community Meetings for each unit

Activities include:
• Hospital-based activities such as arts and crafts, crocheting, indoor and outdoor games, yoga, health and fitness sessions, cooking and baking.
• Outings such as Pottery, Ceramics, restaurants for social eating, Shopping, theatre, cinema, farms, zoos, swimming, horse-riding and other activities aligned with individual's hobbies.

Ofsted Outstanding Provider

Ellern Mede School
LEADERS IN SUPPORTIVE EDUCATION

Education

Ellern Mede School, located on site at Ridgeway, provides Outstanding education to children and young people during their treatment. The teaching is tailored, complementary, and closely aligned with the therapeutic programme to support both learning and recovery.

The school works in partnership with the young people's home school to provide consistency at a difficult time. Every pupil in the school has an education plan to meet their needs. Teaching staff provide a curriculum consisting of the core subjects which are taught to GCSE and A Level. The breadth of the curriculum is enhanced through lessons in art, film studies, geography and PHSE to help engage pupils in discovering and mastering new information about themselves and the world in which they live. Many young people when discharged, return to their own school or further education studies with a fully funded Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), ensuring they get the support they need on their return. For a small number of those who are discharged from the hospital the school may remain their place of learning.

"The excellent leadership of the Head Teacher, supported by effective governance, ensures a culture of high expectations for all pupils. A cohesive partnership between health and educational professionals underpins this outstanding school."

Ofsted

Discharge planning

At Ellern Mede, planning for a safe and supported return home is part of every person's recovery journey from the very start of treatment. We work with each individual to set clear, personalised goals that guide their progress and help build confidence for life beyond hospital.

Care is reviewed regularly through Care Programme Approach (CPA) meetings, held every 4–6 weeks. These meetings bring together the patient, their family or carers where appropriate, and the local community team and case managers. At each meeting, the patient's formulation and care plan are reviewed, and joint decisions are made about ongoing treatment and steps towards discharge.

Our social workers lead on discharge coordination, ensuring planning is tailored to each person's needs. Reintegration begins gradually with supervised community leave, allowing patients to practise skills in real-life settings. This progresses to extended periods of home leave, helping them adjust and build confidence in preparation to leave hospital.

As discharge approaches, we work closely with community services to ensure continuity of care and ongoing support. Patients and families are supported at every step, helping them feel prepared, confident, and equipped for a safe and sustainable transition back home

The role of Tier 4 services in supporting complex needs

Recovery from an eating disorder is unique to each individual and can be particularly complex for those with co-occurring needs or high clinical risk. While national policy promotes community-based care, highly specialised Tier 4 services continue to play an essential role for patients whose needs require intensive, multidisciplinary support.

Ellern Mede is one of a small number of Tier 4 specialist services in the UK equipped to support patients with complex presentations. Our multidisciplinary teams deliver evidence-based, intensive care focused on stabilisation, engagement, and the development of skills that support recovery and longer-term independence.

Inpatient care at Ellern Mede is purposeful, time-limited, and closely integrated with community services. We work collaboratively with commissioners, community teams, families, and wider systems to support early discharge planning, including Section 117 aftercare arrangements where relevant. This joined-up approach ensures continuity of care, effective step-down, and reduced risk of readmission. By combining specialist inpatient expertise with strong collaborative working, our Tier 4 service forms part of a wider, integrated care journey, supporting recovery beyond the hospital setting.

Outcomes and Quality

We are an approved NHS Qualified Provider, registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and subject to peer review through the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Quality Networks (QNIC and QED). We work closely with our commissioning teams and take part in regular quality reviews to ensure safe, effective, and accountable care. As an independent provider, we deliver contracted services across NHS Provider Collaboratives, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), and NHS England Specialised Commissioning, supporting patient and family choice through strong partnerships with NHS, independent, and third-sector organisations.

Our care is evidence-based and aligned with NICE guidance, ensuring treatment is delivered in line with national best practice. We routinely measure clinical outcomes using validated tools, including the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q) and other routine outcome measures, to monitor progress and inform service improvement.

We have robust governance and quality assurance systems, with clear reporting against key performance indicators in line with contractual and regulatory requirements. Feedback from patients, families, and staff is actively encouraged and used to shape service development and drive continuous improvement.

Our multidisciplinary professionals engage in ongoing training, research, and quality improvement activity. We support continuous professional development, host regular academic meetings with internal and external speakers, and contribute to national and international research in eating disorders to ensure our practice remains current and effective.

"We get a real insight into the progress our daughter is making. We have a voice and great relationships with the team. We get fantastic weekly updates and can contact or visit any time. The social worker has really helped us too."

Parents

"When I first arrived my life was a mess. Beyond the physical consequences of my illness was the impact on my family. I didn't want to be here and staff knew it. It was very difficult to have my eating disorder tackled and suppressed but living with my illness was not sustainable. Thanks to the team at Ellern Mede I have made a change that will save my life."

Ex- Patient

Enquiries

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