

NEUROPSYCHOLOGY SERVICE

Thank you for your interest in the Neuropsychology Service. We specialize in the examination of the relationships between brain function and behavior in a wide variety of neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions. Based on these assessments, we provide support and recommendations to assist with medical, educational and vocational interventions.

Our Staff

Thomas Preston, PhD, ABPP/CN, is Director of the Neuropsychology Service and Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurology at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. Preston is a board certified neuropsychologist who has been practicing for over 20 years in medical settings. He obtained his doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Vanderbilt University, and completed fellowships in clinical child psychology and neuropsychology at Yale University and the University of Rochester.

Brian Lebowitz, PhD, ABPP/CN, is also Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. Lebowitz earned his doctorate in clinical psychology at the University of Cincinnati, and completed fellowships in neuropsychology at both the Tampa Veterans' Administration Medical Center and Beth Israel-Deaconess Medical Center / Harvard Medical School in Boston.

Kelly Coulehan, PhD, is a Clinical Neuropsychologist at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. Coulehan earned her doctorate in clinical psychology with a specialization in neuropsychology at Fordham University. She completed her internship at UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, and her fellowship at Mount Sinai Hospital Epilepsy Program.

Fawad Viqar, PhD, is a Clinical Neuropsychologist at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. Viqar earned his doctorate in clinical psychology with a specialization in neuropsychology at Fordham University. He completed his predoctoral internship at NYU Langone's Rusk Rehabilitation and completed his postdoctoral fellowship at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. Viqar has experience working with a variety of psychiatric and neurological disorders and has published research in the areas of epilepsy and neurodegenerative disorders.

Eltonnelle James, PsyD, is a Clinical Neuropsychologist and Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. James earned her doctorate in clinical psychology, with a specialization in neuropsychology, at Midwestern University. She completed her predoctoral internship at the Alexandria Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in adult/geriatric and pediatric neuropsychology at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. James' expertise includes evaluation across various neurological and medical conditions, neurodegenerative diseases, and developmental and learning disorders. She has published research on neural reorganization patterns specific to language functioning in post-stroke aphasia.

Christine O'Brien, PsyD, is a Clinical Neuropsychologist at Stony Brook University Hospital. Dr. O'Brien earned her doctorate in school psychology at St. John's University. She completed her predoctoral internship in pediatric psychology and neuropsychology at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital, and her postdoctoral fellowship in neuropsychology at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling **631-444-8053**.

Visit our website: <http://medicine.stonybrookmedicine.edu/neuropsychology>

Procedures for Arranging a Neuropsychological Evaluation

If you are seeking a neuropsychological evaluation, we strongly recommend that you take the following steps *and* that you carefully read the section on ***Frequently Asked Questions*** below.

1. Secure an initial referral from your primary doctor or referring physician for your insurance company. The referral should be made to Stony Brook University Hospital's Neuropsychology Service, and it must state the reason for neuropsychological testing and possible diagnosis. We are happy to help the referring physician by providing a letter for them about the referral, likely diagnosis, etc.
2. Contact your insurance company regarding preauthorization or pre-certification of services. More information on this issue is provided below in the FAQ section of this brochure. The preauthorization/precertification, if the insurance company is willing to provide one, should be for **Outpatient Services at Stony Brook University Hospital**. If there is a medical condition (for example, seizures, traumatic brain injury, multiple sclerosis, etc), it is critical that you explain this to the insurance company because the effect of these conditions on brain functions is the basis for the referral.
3. Once you have spoken to your insurance company and you have a clear understanding of billing and insurance issues involved, please call our office to set up an appointment.

Please note that insurance company authorization and/or precertification is not a guarantee of payment by your provider.

Payment and/or co-pays for each visit, as outlined under FAQs (#7, below) are due at the time of the visit. Acceptable methods of payment are check, cash, money order or credit card. The Hospital will secure your insurance information at the time of registration and automatically bill your insurance provider. If your insurance provider reimburses any part or all of the costs of the services, you may request a refund from the Patient Accounting Department upon notification from your insurance provider of such reimbursement.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the purposes of neuropsychological assessment?

Neuropsychological assessment has two main purposes. First, it helps us to clarify diagnoses and describe more specifically the effect of the given diagnosis on an individual's cognitive and behavioral functions. Second, it helps us to develop plans for helping both adults and young people to cope with the demands of work, school, and the social world.

2. How long does neuropsychological assessment take?

We conduct neuropsychological assessment at three levels: Full neuropsychological evaluation, neuropsychological consultation, and brief neuropsychological screening.

- *A full Neuropsychological Evaluation* typically ranges from 8 to 12 hours long. Six to 8 of these hours are typically consumed by direct, face-to-face testing with the patient; another two to four hours are required for scoring and writing up reports; and another hour to two hours are typically involved in discussing the results and recommendations with the patient and family.
- In some situations, where the problem is fairly clearly defined and especially when previous testing has been done, the neuropsychologist is able to restrict himself to a streamlined, 5-6 hour *Neuropsychological Consultation*.
- In still other situations, when the neuropsychologist is being asked to rule out a very straightforward diagnosis, such as dementia, *Neuropsychological Screening* can take place over as little as 2 to 3 hours.

3. Will my insurance plan cover a neuropsychological evaluation?

Insurance coverage varies according to the nature of the patient's condition and the type of insurance plan. With developmental and acquired conditions that are clearly neurological in nature, such as traumatic brain injury and epilepsy, there is very often at least partial insurance coverage, and sometimes substantial coverage, for a neuropsychological evaluation. The neuropsychological evaluation costs \$ 10,000.00 approximately.

However, with disorders that are assumed to be more strictly cognitive and behavioral in nature, or when there is no obvious history of neurological illness, such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Learning Disabilities, insurance coverage is less likely.

4. Does the Neuropsychology Service handle insurance preapprovals for neuropsychological evaluations?

Often, your insurance company requires your physician to obtain insurance preapprovals for neuropsychological evaluation. It is your responsibility to contact your insurance provider and ascertain this information. However, we can help you and the referring physician obtain precertification by supplying letters and completing medical necessity forms.

When you speak to the support staff within your insurance plan, you can inform them of **the procedure or CPT Codes for neuropsychological testing, which are 96116, 96121, 96136, 96137, 96132 and 96133**. You can also inform the support staff of the patient's likely diagnosis in your effort to determine whether or not there is insurance coverage. If the patient has any type of medical diagnosis, such as stroke, epilepsy, heart disease, traumatic brain injury, etc., it is critical that you emphasize the primary role of this disorder in the patient's current cognitive and psychosocial concerns. In our billing statements for testing, we will of course do the same.

5. What do I say if my insurance company asks for Dr. Preston's, Dr. Lebowitz's, Dr. Coulehan's, Dr. Viqar's or Dr. James provider number?

Tell your insurance representative that Dr. Preston, Dr. Lebowitz, Dr. Coulehan, Dr. Viqar and Dr. James **do not bill as individual providers** and therefore do not have provider numbers. **The billing should be handled as an Outpatient Service provided by Stony Brook University Hospital, and the Hospital will have a provider number that is known to your insurance company.**

6. How is billing for neuropsychological assessment handled?

For patients with clearly defined medical disorders, and situations in which you have clear insurance company precertification, we ask that you provide a standard insurance co-pay for each visit. We also ask, however, that you sign a guarantee of payment, indicating that you will make up whatever your insurance company does not pay.

Please note that you are responsible for co-pays, deductible and co-insurances).

For patients with developmental attention and learning problems such as ADHD, Reading Disorders, etc., where insurance coverage of any type is less likely, we ask that families provide payment in full for each session prior to the initiation of testing. Please note that a portion of the hours billed are to cover the cost of scoring and writing the extensive report (See FAQ#2 above).

7. If I am unable to pay the full fee for neuropsychological assessment during the course of the evaluation, is it possible for me to work out a payment plan or reduced fee?

The Neuropsychology Service is not authorized to offer reduced fees or payment plans. Stony Brook University Hospital provides a Financial Assistance Program for families with limited income. Families seeking financial help should call the Program at 631-444-4331.