

WELCOME TO ELIMBIAS HEALTH

Your guide to specialist psychiatric care

Our purpose

To provide thoughtful, evidence-informed psychiatric care that recognises the whole person, supports informed decision-making and seeks to eliminate bias from mental health care.

Seeking psychiatric care can feel like a significant step. You may be looking for answers for yourself, your child, a young person or another family member. You may also have been waiting for some time or may be unsure what to expect. This guide explains how our service works, how to prepare, and what happens during and after an assessment.

Elimbias Health is a specialist medical practice providing psychiatric assessment and treatment for children, adolescents and adults. Our aim is to make each stage of care as clear, respectful and clinically appropriate as possible.

1. Why Elimbias Health?

Our philosophy and the importance of choosing the right psychiatrist

Care without assumption

The name Elimbias reflects our commitment to eliminating bias in mental health care. Every person brings a unique history, set of strengths, culture, family context and experience of distress. No one should feel reduced to a diagnosis or defined by an assumption.

We believe the best care begins with listening. Our approach combines clinical expertise with curiosity, compassion and respect. Assessment is intended to understand the person behind the symptoms and to develop a plan that is practical, individualised and grounded in current evidence.

Questions to consider when choosing a psychiatrist

- How long has the psychiatrist practised independently as a vocationally registered specialist?
- What is their principal area of clinical experience?
- Have they completed additional specialist or advanced training relevant to your needs?
- How do they remain current with research, clinical guidance and best practice?
- Do they consider physical health, psychological, developmental, social and family factors — not medication alone?
- How will you be involved in decisions about diagnosis and treatment?

Why experience and specialist training matter

Psychiatry often involves complexity, overlapping symptoms and careful treatment decisions. Length and breadth of experience may contribute to clinical judgement, particularly where presentations are complicated or previous treatment has not been effective. Formal RANZCP Advanced Certificates or other recognised specialist training may also be relevant for particular areas of practice.

Qualifications are only part of good care. Patients also value a psychiatrist who listens carefully, explains reasoning clearly, respects their goals and creates a sense of safety and partnership.

2. Your Care Journey

From referral to treatment planning and follow-up

Referral and clinical review

A referral from a General Practitioner or paediatrician is required before a psychiatry appointment can be arranged. The referral helps us understand the reason for assessment, relevant history, urgency and which clinician is most appropriately matched to the patient.

After a referral is received, it is reviewed by the clinical team. We may request further information, questionnaires, previous reports or medical investigations before offering an appointment.

How appointments are allocated

Every referral represents a person seeking help. Appointment allocation is based on the clinical information supplied, the type of assessment required, clinician expertise, current capacity and availability. We work to provide timely, clinically appropriate appointments while preserving the time required for careful assessment.

Waiting times vary and may change with demand. Our administration team can provide the current estimated timeframe. Please tell us if circumstances change while you are waiting; however, Elimbias Health cannot provide emergency or crisis care.

The usual pathway

1	Referral received and reviewed
2	Additional information requested where needed
3	Appropriate clinician and appointment type identified
4	Consultation or diagnostic assessment
5	Clinical formulation and recommendations discussed
6	Treatment, monitoring, referral or discharge plan agreed
7	Clinical correspondence provided to the GP and other authorised providers

3. Understanding Psychiatric Assessment

A comprehensive assessment is more than a symptom checklist

A psychiatric assessment brings together current symptoms, developmental history, physical and mental health, family history, previous treatment, functioning and the patient's own goals. The purpose is not simply to attach a label, but to reach a careful diagnostic formulation and identify useful next steps.

Initial psychiatric consultation

An initial consultation may explore your current concerns, the course of symptoms, personal and family history, medical conditions, medications, education or employment, relationships, strengths, supports and previous responses to treatment. The clinician will discuss their initial impressions and whether further information or assessment is required.

Comprehensive ADHD diagnostic assessment

An ADHD assessment extends beyond a questionnaire. It may include a detailed clinical interview, developmental and educational history, evidence of symptoms and functional impairment across settings, review of alternative or co-occurring conditions, and collateral information from a parent, partner, teacher or another person who knows the patient well.

Previous school, psychology, paediatric, occupational or medical reports may be considered. Where clinically indicated, physical observations, cardiovascular assessment, laboratory investigations or a recent urine drug screen may be required before medication is initiated. Diagnostic decisions are made using recognised diagnostic criteria and current best-practice guidance.

Autism spectrum disorder assessment pathway

Autism assessment considers developmental history, social communication, patterns of behaviour and interests, sensory experiences, adaptive functioning and the impact of these features in everyday life. Information from family members, school records or previous assessments may be requested. ADHD and autism can co-occur, and combined assessment may be recommended where the clinical history suggests both require consideration.

Assessment timeframes

As a working guide, allow up to 90 minutes for a single comprehensive ADHD or ASD assessment and all general psychiatry appointments and up to two hours for a combined ADHD and ASD assessment. Actual appointment length may vary according to clinical needs.

4. Child and Adolescent Care

Family involvement, confidentiality and developmentally appropriate care

Children and young people require care that reflects their developmental stage, family context, school environment and capacity to participate in decisions. Elimbias Health provides specialist psychiatric care across childhood and adolescence, with the level of parent or caregiver involvement adapted to each situation.

Parents and caregivers

For children, a parent or caregiver is generally involved throughout assessment and treatment. Their knowledge assists the psychiatrist to understand developmental history, strengths, challenges, behaviour across settings and the child's support needs.

Where parents are separated, the clinic may need relevant consent, guardianship information and input from both parents where appropriate. The treating clinician will determine how information is gathered and how appointments are structured in the best interests of the child or young person.

Adolescents and confidentiality

Adolescents often benefit from having part of the consultation with a parent or caregiver and part privately with the psychiatrist. This supports honest discussion while recognising the important role families play. Confidentiality, consent and the circumstances in which information may need to be shared for safety will be explained clearly.

Schools and other professionals

With appropriate consent, the psychiatrist may seek information from or communicate with schools, counsellors, paediatricians, GPs and other professionals. This may help establish how symptoms affect learning, relationships and daily functioning, and support a consistent treatment plan.

5. Preparing for Your Consultation

What to bring, who may attend and how to make the appointment useful

Before your appointment

- Complete requested questionnaires and return them
- Send any previous psychiatric, psychological, paediatric, school or specialist reports where relevant.
- Write down the questions and outcomes that matter most to you.
- Tell the clinic in advance about accessibility, communication or cultural needs.

Support people

Adults may bring a trusted family member, friend or support person. Their role will be discussed at the beginning of the appointment, and the patient's consent and privacy remain central. Children and younger adolescents will usually attend with a parent/s or caregiver.

Telehealth

Secure video consultations may be available where clinically appropriate. Telehealth can be useful for people who live outside Christchurch or have difficulty travelling. You will need a private setting, reliable internet connection and a device with working audio and video. An in-person appointment may be recommended where physical assessment, risk, privacy or diagnostic requirements make telehealth unsuitable.

What happens afterwards

The psychiatrist will discuss the clinical impression and recommendations. Depending on the assessment, the plan may include medication, monitoring, further information gathering, psychological therapy through another provider, communication with a school or employer, additional investigations, referral to another service, follow-up review or discharge to the GP.

It is all right not to remember everything

Appointments can feel demanding. You are welcome to take notes, bring written information and ask the clinician to explain recommendations again. A clear plan is more valuable than trying to cover every concern at once.

6. Medication and Ongoing Monitoring

Shared decisions, safety and repeat prescriptions

Medication is considered when clinically indicated and is not automatically recommended following assessment. The psychiatrist will discuss expected benefits, alternatives, possible adverse effects, monitoring and how treatment fits with the patient's goals and wider care plan.

Starting or changing medication

Before prescribing, the clinician may review physical health, current medicines, allergies, substance use, cardiovascular risk, relevant investigations and potential interactions. Where stimulant treatment is being considered, additional baseline information or tests may be requested. Prescribing and monitoring are undertaken in accordance with applicable New Zealand requirements and professional standards.

Monitoring

Follow-up may assess symptom response, functioning, side effects, adherence, sleep, appetite, mood, blood pressure, pulse or other clinically relevant measures. Medication may be adjusted, continued, changed or stopped depending on benefit, tolerability and safety.

Repeat prescriptions

Repeat prescriptions are available only to existing patients when the treating psychiatrist considers this clinically appropriate. A request may require a review appointment, particularly where monitoring is overdue, symptoms have changed or the medication is controlled.

- Check with the pharmacy that no repeats remain and that the medication is available.
- For stimulant medication, check the earliest lawful collection date.
- Allow approximately 3–5 business days for routine processing.
- Submit requests before medication runs out; urgent or same-day prescribing cannot be guaranteed.
- A \$40 administration fee applies to routine repeat prescription requests made outside of a scheduled appointment. Where clinically appropriate, your psychiatrist may recommend a review appointment before a prescription can be issued.

Ongoing care and discharge

Some patients require a limited number of reviews; others benefit from longer specialist involvement. When clinically appropriate, care may be transferred back to the GP with a written plan. The psychiatrist remains available to clarify recommendations, although a new referral or appointment may be required for substantive reassessment.

7. Communication, Privacy and Coordinated Care

Working with your GP and authorised healthcare providers

Communication with your GP

Elimbias Health ordinarily provides the referring GP with clinical correspondence following consultations, subject to consent and applicable professional obligations. This supports continuity, clarifies recommendations and helps the GP understand monitoring or prescribing responsibilities when care is transferred.

The clinic can respond to appropriate questions from the GP about the treatment plan. More complex advice, changed circumstances or new clinical concerns may require a review appointment.

HealthOne

Elimbias Health contributes to and accesses HealthOne, the secure South Island electronic health record used by authorised healthcare professionals involved in a patient's care. It may contain information such as medications, allergies, laboratory results, GP summaries and hospital records. Access is monitored and audited.

Confidentiality and information sharing

Personal and health information is managed in accordance with New Zealand privacy requirements and professional standards. Relevant information may be shared with healthcare providers involved in care where authorised or otherwise permitted by law. There are limited circumstances in which information may need to be disclosed without consent, including a serious concern for safety or a legal requirement.

Email and administrative communication

Email is useful for appointments, forms and routine administrative matters, but it is not suitable for urgent clinical concerns or extensive clinical advice. Messages are managed during business hours and may become part of the health record. The administration team cannot interpret symptoms, change medication or provide emergency guidance.

Respectful communication

We ask patients, families, clinicians and staff to communicate respectfully. Clear boundaries protect patient safety, clinician time and the wellbeing of the whole practice team.

8. Consultation Fees and Practice Policies

Clear expectations help us work together

Fees and payment

Consultation fees reflect the psychiatrist's clinical time, preparation, review of records, formulation, correspondence and professional responsibilities associated with care. Current fees and payment methods are provided when an appointment is confirmed. Payment is generally required on the day using Eftpos or in advance via online payment.

Appointment changes and cancellations

Please provide as much notice as possible if an appointment must be cancelled or rescheduled. Adequate notice allows the appointment to be offered to another person waiting for care. Cancellation, non-attendance and late-change fees may apply under the current Terms of Agreement found in our registration forms.

Late arrival

A late arrival may shorten the available consultation time and may require rescheduling if a safe and useful assessment cannot be completed. The full fee may still apply.

Reports, forms and work outside appointments

Brief routine correspondence is generally included where it forms part of the consultation. Detailed reports, insurance or legal forms, school or workplace documentation, extensive record review and other work outside appointments may incur an additional fee. The clinician will determine whether the requested document is clinically appropriate.

Service boundaries

Elimbias Health is a specialist medical psychiatry service. It does not provide emergency care.

Occupational therapy, and other allied health services may be recommended externally where these would complement or better meet a patient's needs.

9. When Urgent Care Is Required

Clear, immediate pathways for crisis and safety concerns

Elimbias Health is not an emergency service

Emails, voicemail and prescription requests are not monitored continuously and must not be used when someone may be at immediate risk.

If you or someone you know requires urgent mental health assistance, contact the local Mental Health Crisis Team or attend the nearest Emergency Department, where there is immediate danger or risk to safety, call 111.

Free support is also available by calling or texting 1737 at any time.

Contacting Elimbias Health

For referrals, appointments, account queries and routine administrative enquiries, please use the contact details supplied with your appointment confirmation or visit the Elimbias Health website. Current fees are included in this handbook.

Our commitment

Every referral represents a person, a family and a story that matters. Whether we see a patient once or work alongside them over time, our commitment is to provide careful, evidence based psychiatric care grounded in respect, clarity, curiosity and compassion.

We know that asking for help is not always easy. Our aim is that people feel a little less uncertain and a little less anxious after understanding what to expect.

Fees, Billing and Practice Information

We are committed to providing transparent information about our fees and practice policies. Your appointment confirmation will outline the applicable fee before your consultation. All fees are GST inclusive.

Current consultation fees:

Service	Fee
Comprehensive ADHD or ASD Assessment	\$2,070
ADHD Assessment (existing comprehensive assessment)	\$805
Combined ADHD & ASD Assessment	\$2,300
Initial General Psychiatric Assessment	\$805
30-minute Follow-up	\$345
60-minute Follow-up	\$690
Repeat Prescription (Script) Request	\$40
Psilocybin Eligibility & Screening	\$2,500
Specialist Reports & Third-Party Documentation	Please contact us to discuss your requirements and obtain a fee estimate.
Medico-Legal Assessments & Reports	Please contact us to discuss your requirements and obtain a fee estimate.

Comprehensive assessments include clinical preparation, review of previous information, consultation time, clinical formulation, treatment recommendations and routine GP correspondence where appropriate.

Payment is due before or on the day of your appointment unless otherwise arranged.

Please provide at least 24 hours' notice if you need to change or cancel an appointment. Late cancellations or unattended appointments may incur a cancellation fee.

Repeat prescriptions are available for patients under the ongoing care of an Elimbias psychiatrist and generally require 3–5 business days to process. Additional reports, insurance documentation and extensive liaison may incur additional professional fees, which will be discussed in advance.

Specialist reports and assessments are individually quoted, as the time required varies depending on the complexity of the request. This includes reports prepared for Court proceedings, the Family Court, ACC, insurance providers, employment-related matters, capacity assessments, expert opinions and other third-party organisations. We are happy to discuss your requirements and provide a fee estimate.

Our Promise to you

Shared Decision-Making

Your psychiatrist brings medical expertise, but you are the expert in your own life. The best decisions are made together. We will explain our thinking, discuss options and work with you to develop a plan that reflects your goals and current evidence.

Psychiatry Is Sometimes Uncertain

Not every assessment results in an immediate diagnosis or medication recommendation. Sometimes the safest and most accurate conclusion is that further information or time is needed. Uncertainty is a normal part of good clinical practice.

If We Are Not The Right Service

Occasionally our assessment may conclude that another service or clinician is better placed to help. This does not mean your concerns are unimportant—it means we want you to receive the care that best meets your needs.

Families Matter

We recognise that mental health affects the whole family. We encourage respectful collaboration while balancing privacy, consent and each patient's developmental stage and legal rights.

We Will

- We listen before we conclude.
- We explain our clinical reasoning.
- We treat every person with dignity and respect.
- We base recommendations on current evidence.
- We recognise strengths as well as challenges.
- We work collaboratively with your GP and healthcare team.
- We recommend another service if it is in your best interests.
- We continue learning so our patients benefit from current psychiatric knowledge.
- We never lose sight of the person behind the diagnosis.