Huntington's disease

Consultant Neurologist, Professor Roger Barker holds a specialist clinic every Wednesday for patients with Huntington’s disease (HD), which is a condition which damages certain brain cells. Taking place at the Brain Repair Centre, on the Forvie Site next to the main hospital, it is available to patients at any stage of the illness.

A neurologist, neuropsychologist, advisor from the Huntington’s disease Association and – when necessary – a neuro-psychiatrist are available at the clinics to make sure that all patients can access the right support to meet their needs.

As HD is an inherited condition, our neurology team are able to assess and advise patients before they begin showing symptoms, which include progressive problems with movement, perception, awareness and behaviour. In some cases, they will work with our medical genetics team to carry out predictive and diagnostic testing.

 Patients whose HD has become more established are also cared for at the clinic, where the progression of the disease can be monitored. Although there is no cure for Huntington’s disease, we can help manage symptoms such as irritability or excessive movement with medication, and offer other treatments to improve the skills needed for daily living. Speech and language therapy and occupational therapy can also help patients to communicate more effectively and maintain as much independence as possible.