

SPOTLIGHT

on...paediatrician



Q&A with Dr Inyang Takon, Consultant Paediatrician

Tourettes Action interviewed Dr Takon to find out how a paediatrician can be of support to a child/young person with Tourette Syndrome.

What is Paediatrics?

Paediatrics is the medical specialty that involves management of medical conditions in children and young people. Paediatricians are doctors with medical qualifications who have undergone further specialist training in Paediatrics to enable them to gain the skills they need to see children effectively. Paediatrics can be further divided into different specialties:

General paediatrics. This involves caring for children who have more acute illnesses or physical symptoms. The children are usually seen in the hospital setting.

Neonatology. This involves the care of new born babies including care of premature infants and babies who are unwell after birth.

Community paediatrics. This involves the care of children with difficulties relating to their development or aspects of their behaviour caused by developmental difficulties. Children with learning

difficulties, cerebral palsy, genetic disorders, epilepsy, autism and ADHD are seen by this team. Community Paediatricians commonly carry out assessments with other professionals such as psychologists and Education and Social Care teams.

Subspecialty paediatrics. Paediatricians develop further specialist training in different aspects of the body such as Cardiology (Specialist in Cardiac problems) in children, Neurologist (Specialist in neurological problems).

What is the role of a paediatrician to a child/young person, suspected of having TS or who is already diagnosed with the condition?

Paediatricians in the different specialties apart from Neonatology do come across children with tic disorders. Not all paediatricians are skilled in the assessment and diagnosis of Tourette Syndrome. Paediatricians should be able to take a detailed history from the family about the nature of the tics,

the frequency and severity of the tics. Paediatricians who do not have the skills in the assessment should be able to refer the child to an appropriate service to confirm the diagnosis and plan management.

Can a paediatrician provide therapeutic and/or medical support, or do they need to refer patients to other services?

Paediatricians can provide medical support in the form of medication treatment for children and young people with Tourette Syndrome. Paediatricians are unable to provide therapeutic support, hence they need to refer the children and young people to appropriate psychological services.

How do you get referred to a paediatrician?

Referrals to the paediatrician mainly come through the GP. It is important to provide the GP with as much information needed to include in the referral letter to the paediatrician. Information on associated conditions such as attention and concentration difficulties, anxiety and other behaviour difficulties should be provided.

About Dr Inyang Takon

Dr Takon is a Consultant Paediatrician at the QE11 Hospital in Welwyn Garden City, and is on Tourettes Action's list of consultants offering specialist experience in diagnosing and treating Tourette Syndrome.

Tourettes Action would like to thank Dr Inyang Takon for her very helpful explanations to our questions

RESOURCES

Contact Tourettes Action for a list of consultants specialising in the diagnosis and treatment of children and young people with TS.

Helpdesk phone: 0300 777 8427

Helpdesk email: help@tourettes-action.org.uk