What is Neuropsychological Evaluation? A Step-by-Step Overview of the Process and Purpose Transcript

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Intro to Neuropsychology Assessments

Usually when a patient walks into the door, maybe they call a neuropsychology testing site, they are basically, they have a problem, they have a presenting problem, a condition that they want the neuropsychologist to see.

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What is up, fam? Welcome back to the channel. My name is Phil Sarpon. This is Phil's Guide to PsyD. This channel is dedicated to all things psychology, wellness, and graduate school.

Today, what we're going to be doing is that we're going to be talking all about neuropsychology assessments, evaluation, and testing.

Assessment Workflow From Intake to Feedback

A lot of you guys have been asking me questions about what neuropsychologists do to prepare for neural assessment evaluations to give to their patients and how they kind of think through those processes.

So in this video, hopefully we'll give you guys some examples of a little bit of how neuropsychologists are conceptually thinking about testing and what they do to help their patients.

So before we jump into the testing, I just want to give you guys an overview of what it looks like from start to finish in terms of going through a neuropsychology assessment.

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Once all of that is squared away, they will actually try and schedule an intake session with the neuropsychologist. So usually the neuropsychologist will have about an hour, maybe an hour and a half to do this whole intake session for this patient.

And so what they'll do is that either through phone or in person, they might actually ask the patient a number of different questions about the condition, mental health history, physical health history, a number of different questions.

And what they're trying to do is that they're trying to collect as much information as they can about the condition, because when they collect that information, that is going to tell them what tests to give to that patient.

All right, so that's gonna be the intake session. After the intake session usually there's going to be some type of testing that is scheduled and so the patient may have to come back maybe a week or two weeks later to actually go through testing in person.

Now neuropsychology testing can be anywhere from two hours to eight hours to ten hours and a lot of times people

will actually break it up into a couple days where they might do a part one where it's anywhere from six to eight hours and then a part two where it's anywhere from three to four hours.

So testing can go for a really really long time. Usually patients that get a testing are going to have the neuropsychologist assistant or a psychometrician or maybe another neuropsychologist to do the testing.

After testing is done there's going to be scoring and basically an analysis of the results of what happened in that testing room and what were some of the results that happened.

After all of that is scored and analyzed, the neuropsychologist is going to take a look at the data and then they're going to schedule a feedback session.

What Neuropsychologists Test For

When they schedule the feedback session, that's basically them telling the patient everything that they did in terms of the testing, why they did what they did and what the results were, and maybe some recommendations to help them figure out whatever is going on.

So recommendations could look like maybe a referral to a psychiatrist or maybe some recommendations to a school to help a student. So that is the feedback session.

Now after the feedback session, the neuropsychologist is actually going to write the report. They might dictate the report and so they might actually dictate through an audio recording service that will transcribe what they say into a written report and then they'll send that into the parents or the patient or the school or the doctor or whoever needs the paperwork.

And that neuropsychology assessment report is going to go in detail with all of the things that the neuropsychologist did, why they did what they did, and what that means for the patient.

So that's an overview of what it looks like to go into a neuropsychology testing site and to get a neuropsychology evaluation done. Now, here are some of the categories that neuropsychologists will use to help them figure out what tests specifically to use for patients.

So the first thing, is that we've separated this out into a couple different broad categories. The first one is personality, mood, or emotion. If someone's coming in with a lot of emotional dysregulation, the neuropsychologist is going to pick certain tests that are going to evaluate and assess personality, mood, emotion, and so forth.

Now, if someone's coming in and they're having difficulties concentrating or difficulties with organization and that's related to their executive functioning, the neuropsychologist is going to choose tests that are specifically going to test for executive functioning.

Common Tests and Training Path

Same thing with attention, same thing with memory, same thing with social dynamics, same thing with language and verbal fluency and the same thing with just general learning.

So when it comes to learning a lot of students will probably see a neuropsychologist perhaps at some point if they're not doing well and so either the teachers will be concerned or the parents will be concerned and so they usually will take that child in to see a neuropsychologist to figure out what exactly is going on and and maybe why that child isn't doing so well.

And then usually after that assessment or that evaluation, the neuropsychologist can give some recommendations to the parents or to the school to specifically help that child in their learning environment.

Now, I found a website that I think has a lot of great neuropsychology tests that are some of the tests that I've used

and a lot of the tests that neuropsychologists will use in their practice.

Now again, this may not be the full comprehensive list of neuropsychology tests. There's actually probably a lot more than this, but I think this is probably the main list of the most commonly used neuropsychology tests that you guys can look into.

So as I mentioned before, and I've said this in previous videos, A lot of neuropsychology tests are going to have to deal with specifically looking at specific things.

And as you can see, the list is pretty lengthy. Now, some of these are specific for things like ADHD or dyslexia. Some of this are specific for personality.

Some of this are specific for language and fluency. And some of these tests, if you want to have a little bit more of a detailed description of some of these tests, You can always click in and see if you can learn a little bit more about it.

Now, I will say if you go into a clinical psychology program or a neuropsychology program, they may not teach all of these tests. In fact, a lot of students get more experience in the practicum sites as well as in their internship.

Usually for neuropsychologists, they're going to go through a doctoral program, PsyD or PhD. and then after that they're going to go and do a one-year internship that is specifically focused on neuropsychology and then usually after that they do about two years of a postdoc that is specifically again focused all on neuropsychology and so there's a number of years whether it's four to six years of school and then the one-year internship and then two years of the postdoc It is a little bit of a learning curve to learn some of these tests, but I will say a lot of it is principle based.

In other words, once you understand a little bit of the underlying principles and what specifically you're testing for, it does make it a lot easier to figure out what exactly to do and some of the instructions of how to do the test.

Now, how do you learn these tests? Well, at your clinical site or at neuropsychology programs. They are going to teach you how to give these tests.

Wrap-Up and Closing Remarks

They're going to teach you how to basically interpret the results and also they're going to teach you how to write it up in a report. And so this is a lot of what neuropsychologists do.

They pretty much are just going to learn a lot of these tests and try and use them to assess different mental health disorders and therefore give results and feedback to patients about their conditions and about what they can do after that point.

Alright guys, so that's a little bit about what neuropsychology testing and evaluation is. Those are some examples of some of the tests that neuropsychologists will give to patients.

If you guys want more information or have any further questions, please put it down in the comment section below. But if you haven't already, subscribe to the channel, like this video, and I will see you guys in the next video.