



# Information leaflet



FPC GENT

This leaflet is designed for both registered patients of FPC Ghent, and their support groups and provides general information regarding FPC Ghent.

Information leaflet

# About FPC Ghent



The forensic psychiatric centre in Ghent

FPC Ghent is a forensic psychiatric centre that provides **customised care** to patients who are interned. This care is provided in a clinical treatment context. Treatment and security go hand in hand. Because treatment happens in a healthcare institution, we refer to our internees as patients. The centre has room for 264 patients. All places at FPC Ghent are occupied, and therefore there is a waiting list.

Forensic psychiatric patients in FPC Ghent are treated with the aim of reducing the risk of new offences and removing or managing the underlying causes of the criminal behaviour. In this way, entering back into society becomes safe and possible. FPC Ghent does this in close collaboration with patients and their

support groups. The crime committed (crime analysis and risk inventory) and the psychiatric diagnosis form the basis for the treatment of forensic psychiatric patients.

The stay and treatment at FPC Ghent are the first step in the forensic care chain that enables outflow to external care circuits. By offering customised care, forensic patients are able to reintegrate into society and a suitable follow-up process for each patient can be used. Possible follow-up provisions are medium security VAPH institutions ('Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities'), sheltered living, long-term care, etc.

# Interned at FPC Ghent: now what?



Observation and orientation department

## Interview

As soon as the Chamber for the Protection of Society (CPS) decides that a patient should be admitted to FPC Ghent, they are placed on a waiting list. When interment is likely, an **introductory interview is arranged**. It is not possible to give an indication in advance of the period within which the interview will take place, nor when the internment in FPC Ghent will follow. As soon as there is more information about the period within which the interview or internment will take place, the patient will be informed by the institution where they are currently staying.

The introductory interview takes place with employees of FPC Ghent, in the institution where the patient is currently staying.

It is intended to get acquainted and provide the patient with information regarding their upcoming stay in FPC Ghent. In addition, a number of standard questions are asked about the state of affairs, any social problems in the family, finances, etc.

- > Admission to FPC Ghent takes place on the basis of the chronology of the internment or orientation decision of the CPS.

## Admission

Admission takes place in the **observation & orientation** department. The first weeks are all about getting to know each other. In the department, the forensic psychiatric staff (department staff) and the other patients are introduced.



Prairie garden in bloom and view of the reintegration department

Additionally, this period is also used to determine the best possible treatment for the patient. **An individual treatment plan** is drawn up for each patient. Based on observation, evolution and diagnostic research, we determine which **follow-up department** the patient will go to.

Each patient is admitted to their own room with a basic inventory. These are basic amenities provided by FPC Ghent. Over time, this can be expanded with personal items. The basic condition here is that these items are not on the list of prohibited items. The expansion is always examined individually for each patient and decided by the team of carers. For example, cash and drugs are not allowed in the centre. We use a pay badge to make small purchases. Certain goods, such as mobile phones and identity cards, may not be stored in your own room.

The freedom of movement within the centre differs per patient and/or per department. By default, each patient has a personal access badge which allows them

to move independently within the centre, at allowed places and times.

The freedom of movement is limited to the department (own room and living space). Expansion is determined on a multidisciplinary basis and included in the treatment plan, in which conditions can be imposed on freedom of movement.

To make the first weeks go as smooth as possible and to the desired result, internees are not allowed to leave the centre in this period. This means that any modalities that patients enjoyed in prison are temporarily not permitted when admitted to FPC Ghent.

The treatment team examines on a multidisciplinary basis whether leave can take place (and what type) and advises the CPS on this. It goes without saying that any leave must always fit within the treatment.

The CPS decides which leave permits it grants and under what conditions the leave can continue. If there is a therapeutic contra-indication, FPC Antwerp can decide not to allow leave. This must be reported to the KBM.



Living area in the reintegration department

## Environmental therapy, a therapeutic living environment

FPC Ghent has a therapeutic living environment that follows the principle of environmental therapy. A distinction is made between two environments: the **supportive environment** and the **social-therapeutic environment**.

In both environments, the social group is central and forms a community in which patients learn to live together. The emphasis is on taking responsibility for oneself, for others and for the support group. Each patient receives guidance from the department and has weekly conversations with the counsellors. In addition, a group conversation takes place regularly...

## Supportive environment

Patients with a psychotic vulnerability or intellectual disability are admitted in a supportive environment. They are housed in separate departments. In the supportive environment, the emphasis is on **customised treatment by providing support** where necessary. This may include support with general daily care or with the learning of social skills. Mental stabilisation and a highly structured living environment are important pillars in a supportive treatment environment.

The supportive approach has two objectives: on the one hand, to **prevent disruptions and relapse** into uncontrolled behaviour and, on the other hand, to **strengthen the identity of the individual patient**.

## Social-therapeutic environment

Patients with a personality disorder are mainly admitted in a socio-therapeutic environment.

In such an environment, **strengthening the contact and interaction of the patient with their environment** is central. The aim is to **strengthen the social role** of the patient in society where they will return to.

Through the social interaction with fellow patients and the department staff, the patient learns to behave in an acceptable way and is offered the opportunity to practise new behaviour. In this way, patients are confronted with the consequences of their behaviour and learn to adapt it to form an acceptable social identity..

## Treatment and security go hand in hand

In order to ensure that the treatment and the stay in FPC Ghent run as smoothly as possible, we work within a therapeutic living environment. In the treatment of patients, we always aim for a balance between securing and treating, in particular with a view to relational safety. Risk management plays an important role in the treatment. We try to work preventively as much as possible. In this context, checks can be carried out when indicated and/or on a regular basis. An example of a check is a urine drug screening.

In the exceptional cases where risk could not be controlled and there is an acute danger to the health of the patient or to the safety of fellow patients, employees or visitors, measures can be taken.

These measures are, of course, limited to an absolute minimum, duration and intensity and are only applied when absolutely necessary. These also are always in proportion to the severity of the danger and are only applied when there are no other possibilities to control the risk.

## Type of treatment

**Risk management is a central aspect of the treatment.** This aims to prevent relapse into criminal behaviour by recognising and controlling risks. To make sure the treatment plans are as effective as possible, they are drawn up together with the patient. Specific goals are set for each discipline in order to make the chance of an independent life as high as possible and the chance of recidivism as low as possible. FPC Ghent provides various therapies to achieve the set goals.

The **customised treatment process** consists of a number of basic modules (care path), to which customised modules are added, according to the pace of the progress of the patient. Depending on the diagnosis and the needs of the patient, the multidisciplinary team determines which care path(s) are most suitable for the patient and how many modules the patient can follow per week.

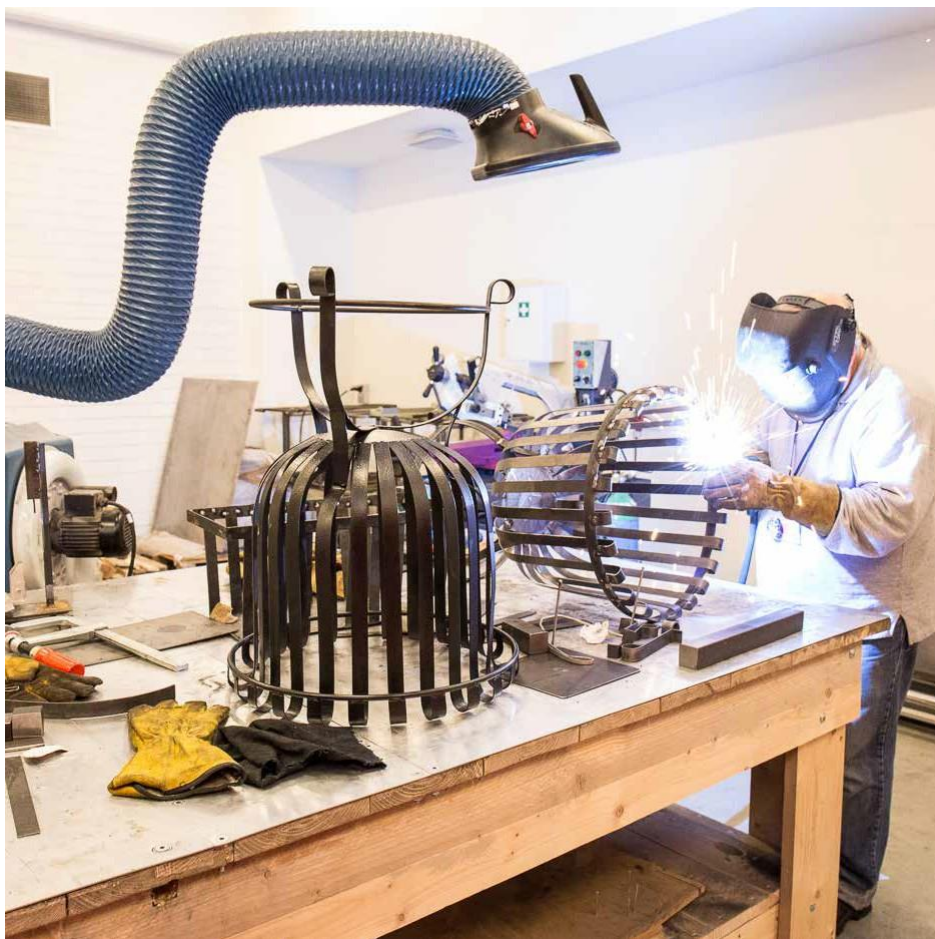
The **care pathways and the customised modules** that are added are given in groups. Depending on the diagnosis, the crime and any other issues, we involve the patient in the search for therapies that will be the most suitable. There are care pathways for different groups of patients.

Depending on the diagnosis and request for help, a patient can be registered for **individual therapy** by the departmental psychologist after multidisciplinary consultation in a treatment plan discussion. The individual therapies are usually based on

cognitive behavioural therapy and motivational interviewing by a psychologist or a non-verbal therapist. In addition, there is the possibility of network therapy in case it is needed for the treatment of a patient.

The various non-verbal therapies such as visual, music, drama and psychomotor therapy can also be given individually if necessary.

However, individual therapy is only possible for a patient who cannot function in a group because of his psychiatric problems. As soon as it is possible for the patient, we then switch to **group therapy**.



Various work areas are set up in FPC Ghent, such as wood, metalworking, assembly, etc.



A healthy lifestyle involves exercise. FPC Ghent has a wide range of exercise and sports areas.

## Day programme

FPC Ghent wants to prepare patients as well as possible for their return to society. This means, among other things, that we attach great importance to following a day programme that is tailored to everyone's possibilities.

The day programme consists of blocks of therapy, work learning, education, exercise and recreation in order to build up a meaningful daytime activity. Agreements are made about this in the individual treatment plan.

In the work learning blocks, specific work skills are taught, work attitude is focused on and professional experience is gained. All this benefits the reintegration process of patients.

Based on the 'customised care' principle, work learning blocks are organized that can be attended by as many patients as possible, taking into account the available spaces.

The multidisciplinary team assigns the patients for a number of blocks. Patients are expected to be present in the indicated blocks.

**Acquiring other skills** that are needed in the context of reintegration is an important part of the treatment. These are skills such as arithmetic, dealing with money and papers, computer skills, Dutch for non-native speakers, better reading and writing, traffic rules, the digital world, etc.

By exercising, we maintain a healthy lifestyle. Sports can also be therapeutic and an important part of the growth process because of the interplay, awareness of one's own possibilities, and acceptance of one's own limitations. Patients also learn to deal with others in a constructive way within team sports. This also maximises the chances of reintegration..



Patients can go to the mini-market in the centre once a week.

## Mini-society

According to the schedules for each department, there are opportunities to visit the centre, the mini-market, the clothing store and the library. Social services can also be consulted and a hairdresser and manicurist will visit the facility.

In this way, the patient is presented with a mini-society, as it were, in which people live as normally as possible. There are meaningful daytime activities, such as shopping in the mini-market, shopping for clothes, going to the library, etc. that are focused on social rehabilitation and reintegration.



Frequent matches are organised with clubs from outside the facility.

## Bring the outside inside

By bringing the outside inside, the patient also gets in touch with life outside. Visits from the outside are also part of the social rehabilitation of patients. By regularly receiving groups, by receiving teams from outside for sports competitions, there is contact with the outside world. This not only helps the patient to not be alienated from the outside world, but it also gives the outside world insight into the population of a forensic psychiatric centre and thus create social support for the reintegration of internees.



In order to cope with the somatic problems of the patients, FPC Ghent has well-developed medical services

## Medical unit

Patients can call on a general practitioner and a number of specialists, such as a dentist or physiotherapist in the medical unit. The specialists visit the centre at fixed times. An appointment for a consultation with the medical unit can be made through the department staff.

Visits are always granted depending on the urgency of the issue. The department heads will assess the urgency of the visit to the general practitioner, to make sure that the general practitioner is not attending to patients who could be helped in another way. In case of doubt, the departmental psychiatrist will be consulted.

## Socio-administrative consequences of internment in FPC Ghent

Patients often assume that - by analogy with a provisional release (IOP) - they are also entitled to some form of income during the internment in FPC Ghent. Upon arrival at FPC Ghent, they expect that they will soon (continue to) receive the relevant benefit. In most cases, however, this is not the case.

The reason is that internees are placed in FPC Ghent by the Chamber for the Protection of Society (CPS). The status of internment implies that the Ministry of Justice is responsible for the accommodation costs and the NIHDI ('National Institute for Health and Disability Insurance') for the medical costs, which means that the situation is different from that of a provisional release (IOP). Internment in FPC Ghent is equated with detention in terms of social security and the right to receive allowances and benefits.

This creates some important limitations. On the next page, you will find an overview of the most common forms of income.

| Form of income                                                         | Right to payment during detention/<br>internment in FPC Ghent                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Income replacement and integration allowance (FPS Social Security)     | Not entitled                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Sickness and invalidity benefits (Health Mutual Insurance)             | If entitlement is granted due to internment: entitled to half, but full amount if head of household.                                                                                                                    |
| Integration income (CPAS – 'Social Welfare Department')                | Not entitled                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Unemployment benefit (trade union, auxiliary fund)                     | Not entitled                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Retirement and survivor's pension (PS – 'National Pensions Office')    | Entitlement only during the 1st year of internment<br>- Single people: full amount<br>- Family pension: half to internee (and half to partner)<br>After 1 year: no entitlement (partner retains half of family pension) |
| Income guarantee for the elderly (PS)                                  | Not entitled                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Unemployment with company supplement (formerly early retirement) (NEO) | Not entitled                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Guaranteed family benefits                                             | Entitled under specific conditions                                                                                                                                                                                      |

Internment in FPC Ghent therefore entails a financial limitation for some of the patients - just like in prison.

However, FPC Ghent takes initiatives so that patients have the necessary items during their stay in FPC Ghent (e.g. clothing and personal care products) and so that the financial limitation would not hinder the social rehabilitation process. All these matters are included in the financial

plan, which is drawn up in consultation with the patient and is an integral part of the treatment plan.

In this context, patients can also contact the social services.



During the garden projects work block, patients are introduced to different types of plants and are taught how to maintain them.

## Support fund

FPC Ghent provides compensation for the work that is performed during the work learning blocks. To make this possible, FPC Ghent sets up a support fund for patients. The support fund is also there to provide patients without their own resources with basic necessities.

Patients are designated for x-number of blocks by the multidisciplinary team and are expected to be present in the blocks designated for them. Patients may receive compensation only for the blocks that are effectively attended. The exception to this is absence with a valid reason.

For a work block for which an alternative is set up, compensation is only paid if the patient was present in the replacement block.

The monthly allowance takes into account the number of blocks attended and the number of absentee blocks with valid reason, in relation to the total amount of work blocks that actually were scheduled in that month and for which the patient was designated.

Patients who do extra blocks receive an extra allowance.

## Patient participation

The patient participation in FPC Ghent is very high. Patients are closely involved, both in the individual treatment process as well as with the care organisation.

### On an individual level

- Patients are present at their **treatment plan meeting** and receive a printout of their treatment plan, which they are asked to sign.
- With each measure, the patient receives a **letter** with a comprehensive justification, the step-by-step motivation and the conditions upon which the measure will be terminated.
- The **cleaning of the rooms and living spaces** is done by the patients themselves. The cleaning crew offers support through training and follow-up.
- **Patients do their own laundry** For this purpose, a washing machine, a dryer, a laundry rack, an ironing board and an iron are provided in each department. Tokens for the devices and laundry detergent are offered free of charge.

### On a group level

- A weekly **meeting between patients and employees** is organised at departmental level where related issues are discussed.
- Patients have a **say about the housekeeping** and who takes on which task.
- Patients can make **suggestions on how to spend the departmental budget**. They can decide if they want to do cooking or some other activity in the department. Patients decide this in consultation with the staff, draw up a budget, and make a shopping list.

The centre has a **patient council**. The council works at the organisational level: one patient per department sits on the patient council. The delegate represents the interests of all patients in the department. The executive board, consisting of a chairman, vice-president and secretary, is elected from the delegates. In order to carry out his duties, the President shall be given the opportunity to discuss meeting points with patients in each department. There is a monthly meeting of the patient council with representatives of the management.



The library is staffed by patients.

The objective of this council is to guarantee the collective rights of the patients by periodically consulting with management on general topics concerning the living conditions of the centre and the rules and agreements that are necessary to ensure that the stay in the centre runs as smoothly as possible.

- Every year, the management can organise a **patient debate**, to which all patients are invited and can ask questions to the chief physician and the director of patient care.
- The **clothing store** and **library** are staffed by patients.

## Behaviour in the centre

Within FPC Ghent, it is important that everyone adheres to the expected code of conduct. This applies to both patients and employees.

- Together we are responsible for a safe treatment and living environment. Everyone should feel safe. That is why it is important that we handle each other and each other's property with care. So there is no throwing of objects, we pay attention to our language and do not show aggressive behaviour.
- We take each other into account; i.e. we treat each other the same way we want to be treated ourselves.
- We keep the living environment clean.
- Good cooperation is the key to successful treatment. So responsibility is taken, agreements are kept and we continue to talk to each other

## Internal rules

The internal rules are based on relevant laws and regulations. This determines what is and what is not allowed within the centre. Topics such as nursing, treatment, control, freedom of movement and mediation and the complaint procedure are dealt with here. The internal rules are available for inspection in the common room and are explained in detail upon admission to the department.

## Contact with the outside world

Patients can maintain contact with outside persons by receiving and sending **mail**, making **telephone calls** and receiving **visitors**. The patient must provide the contact information of a potential visitor. Contacts must first be screened by FPC Ghent before they call or visit for the first time. The visitor is informed of the rules within the centre. Some questions are also asked about the contact with the patient.

To allow the patient to follow his daily programme, telephone contact on weekdays is only possible between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m. During the weekend, visits are possible between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. The patient can call screened contacts, not the other way around.

Each patient is responsible for the timely registration of their visit. Visits take place in their own room, unless otherwise determined.



In FPC Ghent, visits take place in their own room, unless otherwise specified

### Visiting times are arranged according to a timetable:

Visiting time 1 p.m. (Weekend & Holidays)

- Arrival between 12 p.m. and 12:45 p.m.
- Start screening by security personnel at 12:15 p.m.
- Reception by care staff at 12:55 p.m.
- Late visitors will be collected by 1:30 p.m.

Visiting time at 3 p.m. (Weekend & Holidays)

- Arrival between 2 p.m. and 2:45 p.m.
- Start screening by security personnel at 2:15 p.m.
- Reception by care staff at 2:55 p.m.
- Late visitors will be collected by 3:30 p.m.

Visiting time 5:30 pm. (Tuesday & Thursday)

- Arrival between 4:30 p.m. and 5:15 p.m.
- Start screening by security personnel at 4:45 p.m.
- Reception by care staff at 5:25 p.m.
- Late visitors will be collected by 6 p.m.

## The role of the support group within the treatment of the patient

FPC Ghent strives to involve the support group of the patients as much as possible in the treatment of the patient, of course, with the consent of the patient.

We see the support groups of patients as an important link within the treatment, because it can provide insight from a different perspective. Having an involved support group can play an important role in preventing relapse. We involve them by organising conversations to discuss the evolution and/or possible problems of the treatment, but also by actively involving them in the early detection method. This is a way to detect early signs of negative behaviour patterns in patients so that further escalation can be prevented.

## House rules for visitors

In order to ensure that a visit to FPC Ghent runs as smoothly as possible, FPC Ghent has drawn up a number of rules for visitors. The centre will go over these, together with the visitor:

- All visitors (including children) must voluntarily submit to the access control of the centre;
- Visitors report via the visitor entrance;
  - The visitor identifies himself at the reception via a valid proof of identity;
  - The visitor takes a seat in the waiting room until the visit starts;
  - All prohibited items must be placed in a locker (examples are weapons, communication equipment, alcohol, drugs, etc. Foods that are not factory wrapped or have already been opened are also not allowed.);
  - The personal luggage (incl. contents of jacket pockets, jacket, handbag, belt, jewellery, etc.) is placed in a container and put through the X-RAY machine;
  - The visitor must pass through the metal detection gate (without setting the detector off);

- If in doubt, the visitor can be subjected to a screening with the hand scan;
- The visitor may be subjected to check in the context of non-metallic contraband (such as drugs, etc.). Drug detection dogs can be used for this.
- Goods for patients will be checked using the 'application for import goods' form;
- After this, the visitor is taken to the second waiting room and picked up by a member of the care team.
- Visitors must comply with the conditions set with regard to their visit and with the rules that apply in the centre. They must strictly follow the instructions of the department staff. Anyone who does not comply with this can be immediately removed from the centre by the department staff.
- Visitors who have been removed from the centre are subjected to the decision of the departmental psychologist whether they are allowed into the centre before a subsequent visit.
- Anyone who has to keep medication for personal use must be able to prove this with a doctor's statement.
- The departmental staff may decide that certain items must be placed in custody during the visit to the department.
- Visitors may only move within the centre under the supervision of the department staff (with the exception of the patient's room).
- The departmental psychologist may set a maximum number of visitors at the same time in a department.
- Persons under the age of 18 can only be admitted to the centre under the supervision of an adult (and possibly with the consent of the parent/guardian). The supervisors are responsible for the minor.
- In consultation with the departmental staff, visits may be permitted on public holidays belonging to the cultural or religious background of the patient.
- FPC Ghent is not liable for damage incurred during a visit to the centre.



Smoking is only allowed in designated smoking and outdoor areas

## Smoking ban

In view of the technical installations of the building, FPC Ghent has a no-smoking policy. This means that smoking is only permitted in designated smoking and outdoor areas, or in rooms for which the centre explicitly gives permission.

While smoking, visitors should not come into contact with other patients. Agreements must therefore be made with the department staff and fellow patients.

# Contact



Do you have any questions about this leaflet? Please contact us by sending an email to **[info@fpcgent.be](mailto:info@fpcgent.be)**.

If you are not able to contact us yourself, you can contact us via your contact person in the institution in which you are staying.

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