

This is one way in which we provide counselling. We treat everyone as an individual and are led by you as to what you are ready to talk about and when.

There are a number of psychological therapies for individuals and families that can help the recovery process. Therapy may be aimed at understanding how the psychosis came about, how to cope with the symptoms and the consequences for yourself and others, as well as how to reduce distress.

Your therapist will talk through the psychological therapies they recommend. You may have heard that specific types of therapy such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) are particularly useful. CBT can help with many types of problems, but much depends on the individual, so we will consider and discuss it with you.

Relapse prevention

Many of the treatments offered play a vital role in preventing a reoccurrence of psychosis (called a 'relapse'). Taking medication as prescribed, understanding psychosis and learning how to manage stress will all help prevent relapse.

As the recovery phase progresses people may ask questions such as, "Why me?", and it is often useful to discuss these issues with a professional. People can be given help to learn practical ways to prevent further episodes, such as stress management and early recognition of warning signs.

If you would like this information in another language, Braille, easy-read, large print or audio, call 020 8772 5532.

In addition, becoming educated about the early warning signs of relapse and developing a plan of action if these occur, can help thwart or reduce the severity of relapse.

Support groups

Access to or joining a support group can be very beneficial. Support groups provide a safe environment for a person to meet others who have had similar experiences. Groups are also a great way to learn about psychosis through things like discussions and videos and to be positive about recovery.

Psychosis is treatable. Recovery is expected.

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Produced by the Early Intervention Team.

For more information call 020 8682 6571.

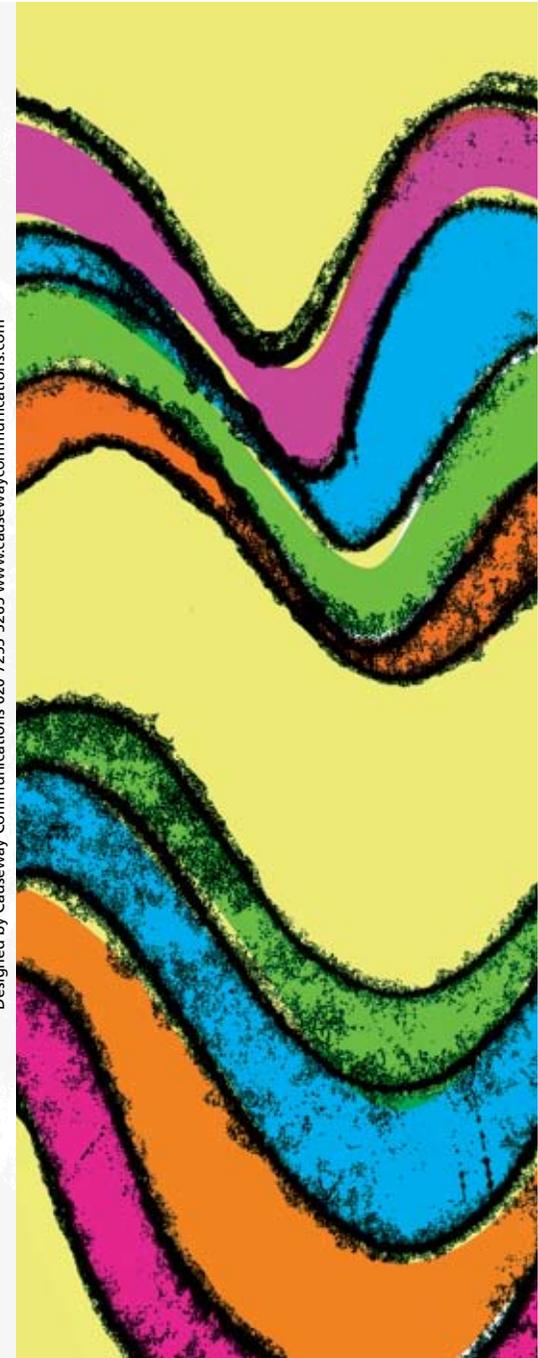
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October 2007

Designed by Causeway Communications 020 7255 5265 www.causewaycommunications.com



Getting better – how psychosis can be treated



This leaflet explains the different ways psychosis can be helped.

Psychosis can be treated in a number of ways. It is likely that a combination of measures can help speed the recovery process and improve quality of life for both the person and their family.

These measures include:

- education
- medication, including close monitoring of side effects
- stress management
- psychological therapy
- a strong, supportive environment
- access to education, training, work, voluntary work and career development skills
- working with the family
- helping people to cope with everyday tasks at home
- helping with access to finance, benefits, housing and so on.

How to get help out of hours

Weekdays 5pm- 9am

Weekends (24 hours)

Bank Holidays (24 hours)

Current patients of the Trust and their carers can contact the Trust Crisis Line in a psychiatric emergency.

Call **0800 028 8000**

Education

Learning about psychosis itself is an important part of getting better because it allows the person and their family to understand the experience of psychosis and what to expect from the help provided.

Medication

Medication is also an important part of the treatment of psychosis. Medication relieves symptoms and is critical in preventing relapse. It is usually recommended for at least one year after recovery to protect against future relapse. Medication works best and has fewer side effects when taken regularly.

There are many different medications available to treat psychosis. These medications are called antipsychotics. Some of the most commonly used medications include:

- risperidone (Risperdal)
- olanzapine (Zyprexa)
- quetiapine (Seroquel)
- aripiprazole (Abilify)
- clozapine (Clozaril)
- paliperidone (Invega)
- amisulpiride (Solian)

Depending on the symptoms, other medications are sometimes used along with antipsychotics, such as antidepressants or mood stabilizers.

Monitoring and handling side-effects of medication

Mental health professionals need to closely monitor people taking antipsychotics and any side effects they are experiencing. Many of the side effects of antipsychotic medication diminish over time. Some people do not experience any side effects at all. Common side effects include tiredness, dry mouth, blurred vision and weight gain.

Different Antipsychotics differ in their side effects. Those with fewest side effects are usually tried first. If side effects do develop, there are several options:

- a lower dose may be recommended
- an extra medication may be prescribed to reduce the side effects
- a different medication may be prescribed instead
- mental health professionals may work with a person to find ways of coping better (such as chewing gum for dry mouth or walking more to avoid weight gain).

Counselling or therapy

Having someone to talk to is an important part of treatment. The exact method may vary depending on the individual and the phase of the psychotic episode.

A person with acute psychotic symptoms may simply want to know there is someone who can understand their experience and reassure them they will recover.

