

Customer Contact - Notes to Support Discussion

How can I help the customer?

- Use customer service skills such as empathy, sympathy, do not rush them, remember they are the expert on their condition
- Use appropriate questions to find out what they need

How can I signpost the customer?

- Ensure we understand their specific needs and do what we can to ensure we meet them – ask questions and listen
- Keep yourself informed about useful websites, local support groups etc
- Make best use of the support within Jobcentre Plus such as the DEA, or Work Psychologist
- Make use of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) initiative. The DEA or Work Psychologist may help provide information on how to access these services locally.

What provision is available for this customer?

- Keep ourselves up to date with the support available by using the intranet, discussions with colleagues, reading local notice boards etc

Frightened I'll make the customer's situation worse by saying the wrong thing

- Use customer service communication skills
- Use the appropriate terminology for their condition, if they have one
- Ask questions to find out exactly what they need
- Avoid assumptions and stereotypes.

Frightened they may become upset or act strange and I won't know what to do

- Use empathy and sympathy
- If they appear distressed, ask if they need anything – perhaps they just need a short break
- Make sure you are aware of local arrangements for summoning help or support

Worried about causing them to hurt or kill themselves

- Remember the extent of your responsibilities – you cannot solve all the problems and should not try to
- Use empathy
- Signpost them to appropriate bodies that may be able to help, such as their GP (the DEA or Work Psychologist may be able to provide information on local crisis lines etc)

Frightened they will attack me

- Be aware of the myths around mental health conditions and violence
- Use keeping safe techniques if necessary
- Make sure you are aware of local arrangements for summoning help or support
- If you feel in danger, remove yourself from the situation and complete an incident form.