

# Common Treatments for Mental Health Conditions and Sources of Support

Mental health conditions are treatable and can be managed with the right help and support.

## Recovery

The key idea of Recovery for people with a mental health condition is one of hope - that it is possible for meaningful life to be restored, despite serious mental illness.

Recovery emphasises that while people may not have full control over their symptoms, they can have full control over their lives. Recovery is not about 'getting rid' of problems, it is about seeing people beyond their problem. Mental illness and social attitudes to mental illness often impose limits on people experiencing ill health. Recovery looks beyond these limits to help people achieve their own goals and aspirations.

Further information on Recovery is available by following the A-Z at:  
[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)

## Medication

It is not necessary to have detailed knowledge of medication but it is important to know that some people may experience side effects which may affect work and jobsearch activities, especially if doses of medication have recently changed.

Possible side effects of the medication may include:

- Fatigue/drowsiness
- Restlessness
- Blurred vision
- Nausea.

## Types of Therapy

**Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT):** This is an evidence-based therapy that provides effective help for a wide range of mental health conditions, particularly depressive and anxiety based disorders.

CBT is based on the idea that there are strong links between how people think, how they act, and their emotions. Unlike some of the other talking therapies, it focuses more on the "here and now" problems and difficulties, instead of focussing on the causes of distress or symptoms in the past. CBT is now more widely available under the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) initiative.

The IAPT initiative aims to improve access to evidence based talking therapies in the NHS through an expansion of the psychological therapy workforce and service. The programme offers evidence-based intervention and treatment primarily to people with mild to moderate depression and anxiety disorders.

DEAs may be able to provide up to date information on how to access these services locally.

**Computer-aided CBT:** There are currently two software programmes recommended by the Department of Health:

- Beating the Blues for people with mild and moderate depression.
- Fear Fighter for people with panic and phobia.

For further information see the Royal College of Psychiatrists website:

[www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/cbt.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall/treatments/cbt.aspx)

- Counselling
- Psychotherapy – one to one or in a group.

## Self Help

- Self help resources are available, for example books and interactive computer packages (guided self help is accessible via GPs in some areas)
- Relaxation techniques
- Healthy lifestyle
- Support groups.

## Skills Acquisition

In some areas, courses or workshops are available via the NHS or other organisations such as MIND in anxiety management, confidence building, assertiveness, anger management etc.