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Acute Care Pathway Service Guidelines

Advice for service users,
carers and families.

September 2021





This leaflet is for service users, carers, families and those with an interest in services for people experiencing acute mental health issues. It is a shortened version of the [‘Briefing Paper: Psychological Services within the Acute Adult Mental Health Care Pathway, Guidelines for Commissioners and Managers’](#) which outlines the role of psychology in The Acute Mental Health Pathway. The briefing paper was made with the help of experts by experience and others who work within the Acute Care Pathway.

The Acute Care Pathway includes;

Adult Mental Health Inpatient Services, hospital based care.

Crisis Home Treatment Teams who support people in mental health crisis in the community.

Mental Health Liaison Teams at A&E Departments in general hospitals.

WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

You should be given the chance to tell your story and develop a shared understanding of how your crisis came about. This joint way of understanding can help make links between your past and recent events. Understanding how you have made sense of what has happened to you, and your mental health crisis can help to identify goals for your admission and your treatment plans.

Psychological support should be available along with other support, such

as medication and occupational therapy. You should be helped to choose the best fit for your needs. A range of short, adapted psychological support can help people with depression, anxiety, difficulties managing emotions, post-trauma symptoms and psychosis. The aim is to help people feel better and to learn skills to manage their mental health better. This support usually ends when your acute crisis ends, but you may be offered support from other services if needed.

WHERE SHOULD PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FIT INTO YOUR CARE?

Psychological support should be offered to you quickly. You should be given skills and tools that can help you during times of distress. This may be one-to-one or group based sessions. Family support may also be offered. Sessions with other people who are

important to you may be helpful. Psychological practitioners should be part of the team helping you during your acute care. If this support isn't available, you have the right to ask for it as part of your care.

WHAT IF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT ISN'T OFFERED OR AVAILABLE?

Advanced statements can be a good way of sharing and recording your wishes. If you would like care that includes other options to medication or along with medication, you can ask for this. You can ask your named nurse or other staff member to get you an Advanced Statement form and help you to complete it. All trusts have these statements and they must be added to your notes at your request.

You can ask for an 'Advocate', a person not involved with your care, who can help you think about your care and say

what you would find helpful with your care team. In times of crisis it can be hard to make choices about your care and to speak up for yourself. An advocate can help you be heard and help you to make choices about your care. They can help you have control over your life and can take up issues on your behalf if you want them to.

The complaints procedure of your care provider can also be useful. A complaint requires a response with actions and can support you to feel listened to.





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