

Information leaflet

Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) Carer/Family Wellbeing and Support Service

Carer/ family support

When someone close to you experiences mental health problems, like psychosis, family members, partners and friends (carers) can feel unsure about what is happening, and how best to support their loved one. We have developed a support package to help carers/family members make sense of what is happening, including how to make sense of mental health services. These sessions also aim to support family members and carers to think about their own well-being, such as finding additional sources of support, advice and information, and how to help their family member stay well.

What do the sessions involve?

Typically, a family member/carer meets with a member of the team on an individual basis to discuss their needs and what would be helpful for them. There is also the option of meeting for an additional 6 sessions to think in quite practical ways about how best you can be supported. Often carers/family members talk about a range of issues including:

- What is psychosis?
- Why has it happened?
- Will my loved one ever get better?
- What support do I need & how do I access it?
- How can I help the person close to me stay well?

What do carer/family wellbeing sessions not involve?

- Focussing on the past
- Blaming or criticising anyone

Who comes to the sessions and how long do they last?

- An Assistant Psychologist from the Early Intervention in Psychosis team and yourself.
- The meetings can take place at home, but typically you will be asked to meet at an NHS site. For Barking and Dagenham EIP teams this would most likely be at Barking Community Hospital
- They last up to an hour and can be arranged flexibly to suit your needs, for example meeting weekly, fortnightly or monthly.

Is there any evidence that family support is helpful?

- A great deal of research over the last 30 years has shown that family support can help in many ways, particularly preventing service users from becoming unwell again
- Similarly, a great deal of research has shown that carers can experience high levels of stress, emotional distress and feelings of loss and grief. Thus offering carer's support to maintain carer wellbeing is an important part of the care package, especially when considering the vital role carer's play in the recovery of people with psychosis.
- The updated National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Guideline for Schizophrenia (NICE, 2009) indicates that family support in psychosis should be part of the package of care offered.

Chair: Jane Atkinson

Chief executive: John Brouder



- Additionally, the recently updated Care Act (2015) now enshrines the right of carers to access support and information.

How do I get access to this support?

- We want to make it easy for carers/family members to get support, so please speak to a member of the team, such as a Care Coordinator, or contact Katy Bovis (assistant psychologist) for Barking and Dagenham EIP via the details below.
- As a carer/family member you have the legal right to support from mental health services, even if the person experiencing psychosis does not necessarily want you to be involved in their care.

Are there any risks or side effects of family support?

We hope the service will lead to good results and will help you to feel better. However, we recognise this support may not suit everyone's needs and a different type of support might work better for you. If this is the case for you, then it is important to tell the person you are working so we can think together what may be more helpful. For example, EIP service users and their families can also access Family Interventions (FI). FI typically involves several members of the family/support network *and* the service user all meeting together with family therapists in order help the whole family understand what the person with psychosis is going through, and to identify what is helpful and unhelpful for both them and you.

Where can I find more information on support for carers/family members?

More information on what kind of support is useful for carers/family members, how they work and what you can expect from these sessions can be found on the following websites: <http://www.mentalhealthcare.org.uk> (see 'support for family members and other unpaid carers'), www.mentalhealth.org.uk, and www.mind.org.uk.

If you would like to talk about whether some support would be useful, or if you have any questions, please feel free to use the contact details below and they would be happy to respond to any of your questions or concerns.

Contact:

Barking and Dagenham - Katy Bovis, Assistant Psychologist
Mob: 07714 271 005 Tel: 0300 555 1030

Barking Community Hospital
Upney Lane
Barking
Essex
IG11 9LX

Havering – Azadeh Azimi-Azad, Assistant Psychologist
Mob: 07713 707 556 Tel: 0300 555 1091

Redbridge – Edward Mundy, Assistant Psychologist
Mob: 07718 694 458 Tel: 0300 555 1214

Contact NELFT

NELFT switchboard: 0300 555 1200
NELFT website: www.nelft.nhs.uk

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is here to listen and support you in whatever way they can to ensure your experience at NELFT is a positive one. If you are not happy about something at NELFT then PALS will try to help you. If you decide you want to make a formal complaint PALS can advise you how to do this.

PALS information line: **0208 822 4254**

PALS email: nelftcomplaints@nelft.nhs.uk

In crisis and don't know what to do?

If you live in Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham or Havering, you can give us a call for mental health help and advice, anytime of the day or night, on 0300 555 1000. (Calls from a BT landline are the cost of a local call. Calls from other landlines and mobile providers will vary and may cost more).

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