

Family Team Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)

Therapy and support for families
experiencing psychosis

An information leaflet

Shining a light on the future



Who is in the family team?

We are a small group of professionals from the EIP team, who offer therapeutic support to individuals who are troubled by psychotic experiences and to their relatives or others who are close to them (for instance, partners or close friends).

What does the team do?

When a person is experiencing mental health problems this will also have an impact on the lives of those who care about them. This may include a partner, relatives, close friends and important others. The family team aims to offer meetings where those who are concerned about the situation can talk together in a relaxed manner. These meetings focus on people's strengths and on finding new ways of approaching difficulties and moving forward.

We recognise that the distress that people feel in their personal and family lives is often related to social injustices. Therefore, we aim to work in a way that recognises the influence of gender, age, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and disability.

How can family meetings help?

There is a well established body of research showing that family meetings can be helpful in a variety of ways. These might include:

- Sharing ideas and information
- Thinking together about new ways of understanding and dealing with problems and symptoms
- Discussing hopes and plans for the future
- Drawing upon family members' knowledge and experience
- Providing support to family members who are under stress

What happens during the family meetings?

The meetings provide an opportunity to talk together with one or more members of the team about things that are causing concern. The team aims to talk with people in a way that feels relaxed and safe, and which helps to think about things differently and find new ways of tackling difficulties.

Everyone's situation is unique so there is no set plan for the discussion. Family meetings generally last an hour. There might be a single meeting, or they might occur regularly for a while. This will depend on the needs and preferences of the people involved.

The team would be happy to discuss any questions at the meetings.

Who can come to the meetings?

We believe that it is often helpful for the whole family or all of those who are concerned about the situation to come together. At the same time, it is important that people don't feel pressurised to take part, and the meetings can still be extremely helpful when not everyone is present.

The team can also offer appointments to individuals and to couples who are seeking help with the impact of psychosis on their relationships or family life.

Where do they take place?

Family meetings can take place in different settings depending upon what is most appropriate for the discussion that needs to occur and convenient to the people who will be attending. The meetings might occur, for instance, in your home, at the EIP team building or local hospital. Before your first appointment, a member of the EIP team will discuss with you the most appropriate place for the meeting.

Will everything I say be confidential?

In general, what you say in the meeting is private. We will discuss any exceptions with you. In very exceptional circumstances, where there are serious concerns that someone may be at risk, we are obliged to pass on this information to the appropriate professionals.

Please ask if you have any questions about confidentiality. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these with you.

Interpreters

If we would benefit from the use of an Interpreting Service when meeting you, please let us know and we will make arrangements.

What if I have a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint about the service?

If you want to make a comment, suggestion, compliment or complaint you can:

- talk to the people directly involved in your care
- ask a member of staff for a feedback form, or complete a form on the Trust website www.nth.nhs.uk (click on the 'Contact Us' tab)
- telephone the Complaints Department Tel: 0191 245 6672

Useful contacts

- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
 - North of Tyne Tel: 0800 032 02 02
 - South of Tyne - Tel: 0800 328 4397

References

- Association for Family Therapy - www.aft.org.uk



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Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre.

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