

Torbay Depression Pilot

Issue five

Course technique may have saved patient's life

A person with suicidal tendencies appears to have turned his life around after a local GP used techniques from a course aimed at helping health professionals treat people with depression.

Dr Trevor Avis, from Mayfield Medical Centre, Paignton, who attended the Advanced Development Programme (ADP), said a depressed patient who had tried to take his own life several times had become far more positive and self-directed. The person took control of his situation, following consultations where several techniques, such as agreeing achievable goals, were practised.

Dr Avis said: "I was getting quite worried as I did not know how to help him move on from his acute depression and harmful behaviour. Prior to the course I thought I had tried everything, so it was absolutely wonderful when, after I used the new methods, he started to develop a sense of self-worth and resolve his problems proactively."

Dr Avis, who now attends the pilot's action learning set follow-on sessions, added: "The skills we learn are subtle and powerful. They aim to achieve an improved outcome by empowering people to change their situation.

"It isn't about offering solutions, but encouraging and gently prompting people to come up with their own resolutions, by asking a series of open questions. The results can be dramatic."

Practising the techniques: Torbay health professionals and patient representatives at an action learning set (the follow-up training after the Advanced Development Programme) (ADP).



January/February 2009

Self-management programme Taster sessions for health professionals

Health professionals interested in how the depression pilot's self management programme (SMP) helps people, are invited to an event on:

Thursday 30 April
9.30am-1pm
Imperial Hotel

The next SMP courses are on:

Wednesday 4 March
1.30-4.30pm
Saturday 7 March
10am-1pm

To refer a patient or book a place call 0800 030 4225 or email helpdesk.cchi@eppcic.co.uk

Advanced development programme Skills course prompts waiting list

A course aimed at honing the skills of health professionals treating people with depression has been so popular, there is now a waiting list to sign up.

Eight GPs and other primary care practitioners keen to learn the techniques used in the Advanced Development Programme (ADP), will start the third and penultimate series (C), from next month (February).

The final series of three events are on:
10 September
15 October
12 November

To sign up, contact Chris Jackson (details below.)

Evaluation

Shorter surveys after feedback

Patient surveys have been shortened and should now take about 15-20 minutes to complete. Hard copies of the staff questionnaire, as well as a web version, are also now available.

Funded by the pilot's evaluation team at Coventry University, community researchers are to be recruited. Their duties will include distributing questionnaires to patients.

Dr Andy Turner from Coventry University, said: "To ensure that vital project feedback is captured, we aim to survey at least 250 patients and 150 staff now, and again in 2010."



Role-play: Dr Paul Hutchinson (right) responds to an actor playing the part of a patient at an Advanced Development Programme workshop

Service improvement New appointment form trialled

A form to help people with depression focus on what they want to discuss with their GP is being trialled at a Torbay medical practice.

Dr Andrew Haytread at Corner Place Surgery is working with the project to develop a form that encourages people to record issues they want to bring up beforehand, as well as any jointly agreed goals, set at the consultation.

What is the Torbay depression pilot?

Torbay Care Trust and Devon Partnership NHS Trust are working together on a nation-wide pilot to treat people with depression. Targeting both health professionals and patients, the pilot aims to encourage people to resolve their own difficulties, using a series of techniques, learned on training courses.

Co-creating Health is run by independent charitable organisation, The Health Foundation. Torbay's pilot is one of eight sites nationally, each focusing on a different long-term condition.

For more information or to book a place on the ADP course, contact project manager, Chris Jackson, on 01803 210537 or 07825 781202. Or email her at c.jackson@nhs.net