

What does it mean?

When the person you look after is ill and you become involved with mental health services, you may hear and see a lot of words or phrases which are new to you. This section tries to explain some of them.

Acute

A severe, short term episode of mental illness.

Advance statement

A document completed by a person, setting out their wishes in the event of their not being able to decide for themselves at some time in the future (eg a treatment they do not wish to receive, the people they want contacted and any other personal arrangements)

Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP)

Each local authority has a responsibility to provide sufficient numbers of mental health practitioners specifically trained and approved by the local authority under the Mental Health Act 1983. Their role is to assess people for hospital admission and if they consider there is no alternative, to authorise admission and make the necessary arrangements.

Assertive Outreach

A service in the community to engage people who need support but do not engage with services.

Atypical/Anti-psychotic Medication

These are recently introduced forms of medication used to treat psychosis. Some of the more frequently prescribed are Amisulpride, Clozapine, Olanzapine and Risperidone, because they are thought to cause fewer side effects. Clozapine may be used when two or more of the above are ineffective.

Bipolar disorder

Also known as manic depression, is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in a person's mood, energy and ability to function.

Care plan

A plan agreed between the individual, health and social care professionals and carer(s) that specifies the services to be provided.

Care Programme Approach (CPA)

A process for making sure that the needs of people with serious mental health problems are properly assessed, care plans agreed and reviewed. It ensures that support is co-ordinated and that the person themselves and other significant people are fully involved.

Carers assessment

This is an assessment of the needs of the person looking after someone with mental ill health. It is not an assessment of the care they provide.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

CAMHS provides services for young people, under the age of 18 who are experiencing mental health problems.

Chronic

An enduring, long term mental illness.

Clinical psychologist

A clinical psychologist has a psychology degree together with clinical training in psychology. Clinical psychologists are trained in research, assessment and the application of different psychological therapies.

Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT)

The aim of this therapy is to identify situations experienced in the past that still influence current behaviour and how this old pattern may be causing problems in the present and then begins to look for exits from these unhelpful ways of living.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

This treatment is based on the idea that the way an individual feels is related to their patterns of behaviour, thoughts and deep beliefs about themselves. It is a very practical approach.

Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)

The providers of mental health services on a local basis. These Teams include psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, community psychiatric nurses, social workers and occupational therapists, all of whom work jointly in trying to develop a care plan to meet the needs of the person using the services.

Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN)

CPNs are qualified nurses who work with people in the community. They work as part of a CMHT (see above) and may see people in a variety of settings such as at a health centre or in a patient's own home. They work with patients to develop care plans, provide ongoing support with problems, supervise medication, give injections and help with counselling.

Community Resource Team (CRT)

A non-medical team which works alongside the Community Mental Health Team to provide practical support.

Compulsory admission

Admission to hospital under the Mental Health Act for assessment and/or treatment.

Computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (cCBT)

CBT can also be delivered via computer software for use at home. There are a number of cCBT packages that are available for treatment of mild depression, panic and phobia disorders. cCBT programmes can provide more flexibility and ease of access than traditional CBT.

Consent

Permission given by a person to others to share information or to act on their behalf.

Consultant psychiatrist

A consultant psychiatrist is an experienced mental health doctor with additional specialist training in psychiatry. The consultant is medically responsible for the care of people receiving mental health services and also supervises junior doctors.

Crisis Resolution

A community service which aims to resolve difficulties so that people do not have to go into hospital.

Delusions

Persistent thoughts which have no actual basis in reality, but which the individual believes and acts upon.

Depot Injections

Long acting medication often used where people are unable or unwilling to take tablets regularly.

Dual-diagnosis

This can be a combination of a mental illness with other conditions such as alcohol abuse, drug abuse, learning / physical disability.

Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT)

This therapy helps people overcome depression. It is a structured psychotherapy. When something is very painful we can find ourselves trying to ignore it. Most of the time, we know when we are doing this but sometimes we can bury something so successfully that we lose sight of it completely. This is why difficult experiences in the past can continue to affect the way we feel and behave in the present. DIT helps people to find ways of being and coping with difficult relationships in their life.

Early Intervention

An approach where services aim to act quickly in order to prevent problems becoming worse in the longer term. More specifically a service for young people aged 14-35 who experience a first episode of psychosis.

EDT

(Social Care) Emergency Duty Team

Electro-Convulsive Therapy (ECT)

It is most commonly used for severe depression where medication has failed. ECT is always administered under general anaesthetic and produces a mild shock to the brain similar to an epileptic fit. People are often concerned when ECT is discussed, but administered in the right way it can be an extremely effective, life saving treatment.

Extra-pyramidal side effects

The side effects of some drugs where the person develops stiffness and trembling.

Forensic Service

This is the area of mental health service that deals with people who commit criminal offences whilst being mentally ill.

Hallucinations

Experience of sights, sounds, smells and physical sensations that are not real to anyone else.

Healthcare

Services provided by doctors, nurses, pharmacists etc to relieve symptoms which accompany a particular diagnosis.

Healthcare support workers

Healthcare support workers are unqualified nursing staff who work on a hospital ward under the supervision of a qualified nurse.

Holistic

This means considering the whole person in the treatment of the illness – i.e. their physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual and social needs.

The Hospital Managers

Hospital managers are volunteers who have statutory powers and responsibilities to protect the rights of detained service users and to hear appeals against and renewal of sections under the Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended 2007). Hospital managers have a duty to accept the detention order requested by the AMHP (see page 1 of this document) and the doctors on behalf of the trust.

The managers have the power to:

- Discharge detained patients
- Refer cases to the Mental Health Review Tribunal (if appropriate)

Managers must hold a hearing for any of the following:

- If the patient requests it
- On a renewal of a detention
- When a nearest relative is barred from discharging the patient.

If a patient is detained under Sections 2, 3 or 37 of the Mental Health Act, they can appeal to the hospital managers. The person can appeal as many times as they wish, provided 28 days have elapsed since the last managers panel, or mental health review tribunal.

At the hearings, all those involved will attend, including the social worker, the key nurse and preferably the consultant. The hearing is normally held either on the ward or in a specially designated room.

Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA)

When someone is assessed by a doctor or social worker as lacking mental capacity to make key decisions in their lives - perhaps because of mental illness, dementia, learning disability, a stroke or brain injury - they can have the help of a specialist Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA). This is a legal right for people over 16 who lack mental capacity and who do not have an appropriate family member or friend to represent their views.

Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA)

Specialist advocates who are trained to specifically work within the framework of the Mental Health Act to meet the needs of patients.

Inreach Service

The aim of the Inreach Service is to provide help and advice with housing, benefits, debt and financial issues.

Integrative Psychotherapy

Integrative Psychotherapy takes into account many views of human behaviour. It can identify how we make decisions at different life stages, or when we are very stressed and how these choices shape the way we think, feel and behave.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)

IPT is a time-limited and structured psychotherapy. A central idea in IPT is that psychological symptoms, such as depressed mood, can be understood as a response to current difficulties in relationships. These symptoms can, in turn, affect the quality of our relationships.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA)

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 for England and Wales came into force in 2007.

The Act affects people aged 16 or over and provides a statutory framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make some decisions for themselves, for example, people with dementia, learning disabilities, mental health difficulties, stroke or head injuries who may lack capacity to make certain decisions.

The Act makes clear who can take decisions in which situations and how they should go about this. It enables people to plan ahead for a time when they may lack capacity.

The Act covers major decisions about someone's property and affairs, decisions (including advance decisions) about healthcare treatment and where the person lives, as well as everyday decisions about personal care, where the person lacks capacity to make the decisions themselves.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)

The Mental Capacity Act DOL safeguards apply to anyone:

- aged 18 and over
- who suffers from a mental disorder or disability of the mind – such as dementia or a profound learning disability
- who lacks the capacity to give informed consent to the arrangements made for their care and / or treatment and
- for whom deprivation of liberty (within the meaning of Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights [Art.5 ECHR]) is considered after an independent assessment to be necessary in their best interests to protect them from harm.

The safeguards cover patients in hospitals, and people in care homes registered under the Care Standards Act 2000, whether placed under public or private arrangements.

The safeguards are designed to protect the interests of an extremely vulnerable group of service users and to:

- ensure people can be given the care they need in the least restrictive regimes
- prevent arbitrary decisions that deprive vulnerable people of their liberty
- provide safeguards for vulnerable people
- provide them with rights of challenge against unlawful detention
- avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

Mental Health Act Review Tribunal (MHART or MHRT)

Under 'Section 2' of an 'Admission for Assessment', within the first 14 days, a detained person may appeal in writing to the Mental Health Act Review Tribunal (MHART) for their discharge. This is an independent body of people who are responsible for hearing patients' appeals against detention. Members of the Tribunal are appointed by the Lord Chancellor and may be from the fields of law, medicine or be lay persons.

- The Mental Health Review Tribunals have the following powers:
- They can discharge patients from hospital
- They can recommend leave of absence
- They can recommend supervised discharge
- They can decide upon delayed or conditional discharge or transfer to another hospital.

All patients who appeal are entitled to Legal Aid.

If someone has been detained under Section 3 for six months and they have not applied to a Mental Health Review Tribunal, then they must be referred to the Review Tribunal. The panel requires medical, nursing and social reports before the hearing. The patient can see these reports. If there is any information which the team does not wish the patient to see, it should be marked confidential. There are very strict grounds which have to be applied before this can be done.

Mental Health Act, 1983

These are the regulations in place at the moment. You may have heard of 'sections'. This refers to a section of the Mental Health Act. These allow certain mental health care professionals to make assessments and admit people compulsorily to hospital, where they are thought to be a risk to themselves or others, or in danger of serious deterioration if compulsory intervention is not undertaken.

The Mental Health Act Commission (MHAC)

The Mental Health Act Commission is made up of lawyers, nurses, social workers, doctors, lay persons and psychologists. They hold a variety of roles and responsibilities to patients who have been formally detained under the Mental Health Act. These include:

- Reviewing the way the Act operates and the ways the powers of detention are exercised.
- Ensuring that patients' rights are maintained and protected (especially as regards to consent to treatment).
- Making official visits to hospitals to talk to patients, professionals and inspect documentation.
- Providing second opinion approved doctors (SOAD).
- Receiving complaints relating to detention and treatment of individuals under the Act.
- Monitoring the deaths of detained patients.

The MHAC do not have the power to discharge detained patients.

Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)

MBCT teaches the skill of focusing on the present moment and experiencing without judgement. Instead of trying to change unhelpful thinking patterns and irrational beliefs, this approach encourages acceptance. Developing this skill has been proven to undermine habitual thought processes that prolong depressive episodes.

Named nurse/Care coordinator

named nurse/care coordinators work with individuals to ensure that personalised care plans are implemented. The named nurse/care coordinator has overall responsibility for the patient's care, and he or she will monitor the services received. This will include ensuring that all the professionals involved in a person's care are working together and that regular reviews of care are undertaken.

Neurosis

A mental illness that has anxiety at its basis, but during which the person maintains their self-awareness (insight).

Occupational Therapist (OT)

Occupational therapists are qualified healthcare professionals who use purposeful activities to treat people with physical and mental health problems. They work as part of a team to identify problems caused by people's conditions and find ways of coping with these to encourage independence and a better quality of life.

Organic

A mental illness which appears to have a physical origin (eg dementia)

Paranoid/paranoia

Where someone displays irrational thoughts of being victimised or harmed in some way.

Personality disorder

A group of disorders involving long-standing attitudes, behaviours and ways of viewing the world which are outside socially acceptable limits.

Pharmacist

A pharmacist is a healthcare professional who ensures that the medications that service users receive are safe, effective and appropriate.

Psychiatrist

A medical doctor who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of people who have mental health problems. Psychiatrists have undergone specialist training and may diagnose illness, prescribe medication and other forms of appropriate treatment.

Psychodynamic Counselling

This model of therapy provides patients with an opportunity to think about how their past experiences affect their current relationships and lifestyle, in order to enable change and emotional growth.

Psychosis

Mental illness in which a person's ability to think, feel and communicate become distorted and disconnected from reality, and where there is evident loss of insight into their own behaviour.

Psychosomatic

A disease that has physical symptoms and has some psychological factors.

Psychotherapist

Psychotherapists help people to be in more control of their own lives by helping them understand themselves and their relationships with others. They provide therapy on a one to one basis and in groups. There are many different types of psychotherapy (also known as talking therapies).

Recovery (here is one definition)

Recovery is about building a meaningful and satisfying life, as defined by the person themselves, whether or not there are ongoing or recurring symptoms or problems. (Shepherd, Boardman & Slade 2008.)

Registrar

A doctor undergoing specialised training.

Rehabilitation (rehab)

Supported recovery from severe illness.

Schizophrenia

A specific term for mental illness where symptoms include psychosis. (See Main Mental Disorders for a more detailed definition).

Section/sectioned

This refers to a particular part of the Mental Health Act, which is the legislation under which a person may be compulsorily admitted to hospital.

'Section 2'

Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP)

This is a period of assessment in hospital that lasts for up to 28 days. It may be applied for by an Approved Social Worker (ASW) or the person's nearest relative and must be backed up by recommendations from two doctors, one of whom must be a senior psychiatrist.

'Section 3'

This is an admission for compulsory treatment lasting for up to six months. Application is similar to Section 2.

Self harm

Acts self inflicted which cause personal harm.

Service user

A person using mental health and social care services – they may also be referred to as a patient or client.

Single Point of Access (SPA) Acute Assessment and Home Treatment Team

A team of mental health professionals who can support people at home who would otherwise need to be admitted to hospital. The team can also enable earlier discharge from hospital.

Social care

Services based on eligibility criteria by providing personal budgets to support the needs of basic living and independence. This could include day care, support groups, respite care and child care.

Social workers

Social workers have specialist training and experience in assessing mental health difficulties and are familiar with the problems experienced by users of mental health services and their families. They will organise social care support for people in contact with mental health services, such as helping with housing and getting welfare benefits. Some social workers are involved in assessing a person for possible admission to hospital under the Mental Health Act.

Talking treatments/therapies

Includes various forms of therapy: psychotherapy, behaviour treatments etc.

Therapeutic alliance

The trust and positive collaboration between service user and worker (eg service user and Community Psychiatric Nurse, carer and carer's worker).

Therapeutic Liaison Worker (TLW)

Responsible for the timetable of activities and groups each week on acute adult mental health inpatient wards.

Ward clerk

The ward clerk works to ensure the smooth running of the ward by supporting clinical staff and undertaking administrative and secretarial tasks.

Ward round

Meeting of the hospital ward staff at which progress, care and treatment are discussed and co-ordinated, can also be called MDT-Multi-Disciplinary Team Meeting. The meeting takes place with the consultant psychiatrist, service user/carers should be invited and could involve advocate and other workers if the service user gives permission.