



Early Intervention Service

Information for young people: What is psychosis?

What is psychosis?

- Psychosis is a serious and very distressing mental health problem that may have long lasting effects on the person's ability to lead a productive life.
- It is able to disrupt not only the life of the person, but also those close to the person.
- There is a lot of social stigma that goes with psychosis.
- It places the person socially and physically at risk.
- Psychosis is characterised by beliefs and convictions that develop over time, which puts the person at odds with those around him or her and often with society as well.
- The condition may include certain disturbances in the way things are interpreted. There can be misinterpretations as well as linking incorrect causes to things that happen in the person's life.
- A person with psychosis may experience hearing voices of people speaking to and about them when no one is actually present.
- Psychosis can decrease concentration and increase difficulties in dealing with the more complex problems of everyday life.
- It causes a lot of confusion and anxiety.

Can it be treated and if so, how?

Over the past 10 years a lot of good research has indicated that:

- The development of this problem can be interrupted.
- The earlier that treatment takes place, the better the outcome.
- Treatment should include psychological and social approaches as well as the use of appropriate medication.
- The person should be encouraged and guided in getting back into everyday life and pursuing their goals.
- Helping the person make sense of how psychosis developed also improves outcome.

How does psychosis develop?

There are a number of views and many of these are strongly supported by research.

- There is the possibility of a genetic link, but this has not yet been proven to be a necessary factor to develop psychosis. It would add to a person's vulnerability however.
- Evidence suggests that if people have bad/traumatic experiences, it could make them less able to tolerate stress. This is particularly serious if these experiences happen in or throughout childhood.
- The use of street drugs and alcohol abuse can kick-start the problem in a vulnerable person.
- If a person has not learnt how to cope with the demands of life, this makes them more vulnerable. Sometimes, for instance, a person is not presented with the opportunities to learn how to deal with people and the demands of life. This certainly adds to their vulnerability.

The Early Intervention Service

The Early Intervention Service looks at interrupting the development of psychosis, a serious mental health problem.

- All of these factors described help the Early Intervention Service to identify a person who is *at risk* of developing the problem.
- We would rather not wait for a bad thing to happen - we try to get in as early as possible.
- We treat whatever signs are concerning us, the person, and often their family.
- We also help those close to the person to cope and understand what's going on.
- We run alongside and encourage the person to take up their life once again. This would include education, work and the fun things that all people do.
- We are most concerned about younger people (14—35 years old) as this is the age range most at risk.

You can also visit: www.am-i-ok.co.uk

Notes

Notes

Oxfordshire Early Intervention Service

Telephone: 01865 902 724

Buckinghamshire Early Intervention Service

Telephone: 01865 901 517

If you need the information in another language or format please ask us

Nëse ky informacion ju nevojitet në një gjuhë apo format tjetër, ju lutem na kontaktoni

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