Mental Health Treatment Options

Questions you may wish to discuss with your mental health practitioner: Consumers

Checklist for Consumers

When talking to your mental health practitioner, there are questions that you could consider asking. You may not want to ask all of these questions. Tick those that you would like to ask.

About the illness

☐ What is the condition/illness/diagnosis?

If a diagnosis has been made

☐ What are the symptoms that suggest this condition/illness/diagnosis?

☐ What is known about the causes of this condition/illness?

☐ What tests have already been undertaken?

☐ Will there be any further tests?

☐ Will I recover? When?

☐ Where can I get written information about this condition/illness?

☐ How do I explain this condition/illness to my children?

If a diagnosis has NOT YET been made

☐ What diagnoses are you considering?

☐ What tests have already been undertaken?

☐ Will I need to have further tests?

☐ When should I expect to be notified of a diagnosis?

About care and treatment

☐ What are the aims of my care and treatment?

☐ Where can I get written information about my care and treatment?

☐ Who will be responsible for my care (in addition to me)? What exactly will they be responsible for?

☐ Who else will be involved in my care and treatment?

- ☐ How will you ensure that there is regular communication between yourself and other practitioners involved in my care and treatment?

- ☐ What will my treatment consist of (i.e. medication, therapy or other)?

- ☐ Are there alternative treatment options if the suggested treatments do not work, or suit my lifestyle?

- ☐ What will happen if I refuse treatment?

- ☐ What are the signs and symptoms that I am becoming unwell again?

- ☐ What do I do if I am becoming unwell again?

- ☐ Can I put an Advance Health Directive in place and how would I go about this?

- ☐ Who should I contact in an emergency?

- ☐ What can I do to help myself recover?

- ☐ Do you know any self-help techniques that will help my recovery?

- ☐ How do I get in contact with people who have the same illness?

- ☐ Are there any local support, self-help or advocacy groups that I could get in touch with?

Sharing information

- ☐ My carer(s) is/are _____.

- ☐ Will my family and friend carers be involved in discussions concerning my care and treatment?

- ☐ What benefit will I get if my carer is involved in discussions about me?

- ☐ Does my carer have to be involved in discussions relating to my care and treatment?

- ☐ Can I decide what information relating to my care and treatment is shared with my carer?

- ☐ Can I refuse to allow my carer, family and/or friends to be involved in any discussions?

- ☐ Have all the people who will be providing care for me been given at least a minimum amount of information about my planned treatment and living arrangements?

About medications

- ☐ What is the name of the medication?

- ☐ Why have you chosen this medication?

- ☐ What will the medication do?

- ☐ How, when and how often will I need to take it?

- ☐ How long will I need to take it?

- ☐ What results can I expect from taking this medication?

- How much time or effort will it take to experience benefits?

- What is the normal dosage range for this medication?

- Why am I being prescribed more/less than the normal dosage range?

- Can I take a low dose and increase it when necessary?

- Why am I on different types of medication?

- What do I do if I forget to take the medication?

- What will happen if I stop taking the medication?

- What are the side effects of taking this medication?

- How can I manage the side effects?

- If I find the side effects are unmanageable, what can you do about managing or counteracting them?

- Are there any contraindications I need to be aware of when taking this medication?

- Are there any other medications that could be used if this one does not work?

- What other treatment options do I have?

- What symptoms would mean that the dose should be changed?

- Who will be monitoring my medication and how often?

- What specifically will be monitored (i.e. the effect, toxicity or something else)?

- How will I know if the medication is working or not?

- Does this medication have any known or suspected interactions with other medications, including over the counter and complementary medicines?

- Can I take this medication safely with the other medications I am already taking?

- Are there any foods or drinks that I should not consume while taking this medication? Why?

- Is this medication list on the Pharmaceuticals Benefits Scheme (PBS) or will there be a private cost to me?

- Where can I get written information about this medication?

- Can we make a time to review the progress and if necessary revise the treatment plan?

About other treatments

- Are there any other treatments for this illness?

- What are they? Are they effective?

- What treatments will I be undertaking? When? Where? How often? With whom?

- How long will I need to undertake this treatment?

- ☐ How will I know if this treatment is working or not?

- ☐ Is this treatment subsidised by Medicare or will there be a private cost to me?

- ☐ Where can I get written information about this treatment?

- ☐ How will you ensure that there is regular communication between yourself and other practitioners involved in my care and treatment?

- ☐ Can we make a time to review the progress and if necessary revise the treatment plan?

About hospital admissions

- ☐ Will I need to be admitted to hospital? If so, for how long?

- ☐ If I go to hospital, which one will it be?

- ☐ Who will be taking care of my accommodation/family/pets/bills etc. while I am in hospital?

- ☐ What arrangements will be made for my care and treatment after discharge from hospital?

- ☐ Can my children visit me if I am admitted to hospital?

- ☐ Can my family and friend carers visit me if I am admitted to hospital?

About community and government support

- ☐ Are there community support services you recommend that could help me? If so, how do I access these?

- ☐ Can you help me access community housing?

- ☐ Would you support my application for financial assistance such as the disability support pension or sickness allowance?

Other questions I want to remember to ask

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