

# Supporting someone with a mental illness

## For carers, friends and relatives

This factsheet gives tips and suggestions to help you support someone with mental illness. This information is for adults supporting other adults with a mental illness in England.

### Key Points.

- There is no 'one size fits all' way to support someone with a mental illness. How you care for someone will be individual to you and the person you care for.
- The term carer is often used to describe someone who supports someone with a mental illness. You may find carers services and support useful, even if you don't consider yourself to be a carer.
- Make time to look after yourself and your own wellbeing.
- Encourage independence and autonomy. Setting clear boundaries with the person you support may improve wellbeing for both of you.
- Learning about the diagnosis and symptoms of the person you support may help you to support them.
- Make a crisis plan with your relative. Ask if they already have a crisis plan.

### This factsheet covers:

1. [How can I learn about my relative's mental illness?](#)
2. [How can I look after my own wellbeing?](#)
3. [How can I give emotional support to the person I care for?](#)
4. [How can I encourage my relative to get treatment?](#)
5. [How can I help my relative to stay independent?](#)
6. [How can I encourage my relative to socialise and look after their physical health?](#)
7. [How can I help my relative to manage money and find employment?](#)
8. [How can I deal with unwanted behaviour?](#)
9. [How can I prepare to support someone in a mental health crisis?](#)

10. [How can I help someone who is suicidal?](#)

11. [How can I plan for the future?](#)

### [Appendix – Sample crisis plan](#)

**Note:** In this factsheet we call the person you care for ‘your relative.’ But this information is still relevant for you, even if you are not related to the person you support.

[Top](#)

## **1. How can I learn about my relative’s mental illness?**

Learning about your relative’s mental illness and symptoms can help you understand how it affects them day to day. Having more knowledge might help you feel more confident to support them.

You can try the following suggestions:

### **Talk to your relative**

Find out how they experience their mental illness. It might help to ask questions such as:

- What symptoms do you live with?
- How often do you get them?
- Are there certain times when they are better or worse?
- Do you notice any changes when you start to become unwell?
- Do you have any treatment such as medication or talking therapies?
- How often do you have treatment?
- Do you have any side effects from treatment?
- Do you have a crisis plan in place?
- Is there anything that I can do to help?
- Is there anything that I currently do which doesn’t help?

### **Go to a carers group or service**

You can learn about mental illness by meeting and talking to other people. Carers groups and services can be helpful to give and receive emotional and practical support. There may be others going through something similar to you.

The term ‘carer’ can be unhelpful, not everyone identifies with this term. However, if you give support to someone with mental illness you will be able to access local carers groups and services for support.

Most areas have carers groups or services. You can search online or contact local social services to enquire about different groups.

### **Read about your relative’s illness**

You can learn about mental illnesses on trusted websites such as Rethink Mental Illness. You can access our website at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org).

The NHS have reliable information about mental health conditions. Follow this link for more information: [www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/)

You could also buy or borrow a book from the library about mental health conditions.

[Top](#)

## **2. How can I look after my own wellbeing?**

Supporting someone with mental illness may be stressful and difficult at times. Make sure that you look after your own health and wellbeing.

You can try some of the following things to help look after yourself:

### **Set boundaries with your relative**

Boundary setting will help you both to understand what support you are willing and able to give. Regularly take time to think about the support that you currently give to your relative.

Sticking to set boundaries will also help you to make sure that you have enough time for yourself.

It may be helpful to think about the following:

- Are you willing to continue with the level of support you give?
- Are you able to continue with the level of support that you give?
- Does your relative need all of the support that you give?
- Does your relative want all of the support that you give?
- What would happen if you stopped giving certain support?
- Is your relative able to do certain tasks by themselves or with support?
- Is there anyone else who can offer support?
- What would you be doing if you had more free time?

### **Support your relative to be independent**

Helping someone to be independent can take more time in the short term but improve wellbeing for you both in the longer term. See [section 5](#) of this factsheet for more information.

### **Take a break**

Don't be afraid to take a break from supporting your relative. This may be short term or longer term.

You can find more information about '**Respite – breaks for carers**' at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) . Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

## Respond to your own wellbeing needs

- Remember that your needs matter.
- Give yourself time to enjoy life, such as a hobby or leisure activity.
- Try to take some time to regularly do something you find relaxing. A short meditation or a relaxation exercise might help you manage emotion such as stress.
- Try and keep physically active and have a well-balanced diet.
- Join a carers or support group for peer support. You can also use an emotional support helpline if you are unable to get to meetings. There is a list of emotional support helplines at the end of this factsheet.
- Talk to your GP if you are feeling low or stressed. Talking therapies like counselling or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) might help you.

You can find more information about '**Stress – How to cope**' at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) . Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

## Be organised

Keep a record of your relative's:

- appointments and meetings.
- medications and times they need to be taken, checking them off as they are taken.

## Get financial support

Find out if there are any benefits or financial schemes you may be entitled to as a carer. Such as carers allowance or council tax reduction.

You can find more information about benefit entitlement on the **Mental Health and Money Advice** website.

[Advice for carers : Mental Health & Money Advice \(mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org\)](http://mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org)

## Look for local support

Ask your local authority's social care services department for a 'carer's assessment'. A carer's assessment is there to support you as a carer.

If you are no longer willing or able to care for your relative the local authority should support with any eligible care needs that your relative has. This is inline with the Care Act 2014. The local authority is ultimately responsible for supporting certain social care needs.

You can find more information about '**Carer's assessments – under the Care Act 2014**' at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) . Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

Local services such as carers services or charities may be able to give support. You can often find local services by looking online.

Your local authority may have an updated list of local carers groups and services. Check their website or call them.

### **Carers Advocacy**

They can help you understand your rights and communicate your needs to services. They can also help you find information or make a complaint if you need to. Look online to find a local carers advocacy service.<sup>1</sup>

Carers UK have a free self-advocacy guide to help you get your voice heard: [www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/guides-and-tools/being-heard-a-self-advocacy-guide-for-carers/](http://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/guides-and-tools/being-heard-a-self-advocacy-guide-for-carers/).

### **Recovery College**

They provide free educational courses to those with mental health conditions. Some colleges also support carers.

Certain courses may help you to learn more about mental illness and learn skills to help you support your relative. They usually offer courses online as well as in person. Look online to see if your local NHS Trust has a Recovery College.

[Top](#)

## **3. How can I give emotional support to the person I care for?**

Offer to listen to the person you are supporting. Listening to someone doesn't mean you have to say much back to them or come up with solutions. They may find it helpful to just talk to you and know that you care.

### **How do I talk to my relative?**

Before starting a conversation with your relative, it may be useful to think about the following:

- Are you in a suitable place to talk?
- How much time do you need to have a conversation?
- Is there anything specific you want to talk about?
- Is there anything you can do to avoid being disturbed?
- Are you mentally able to cope with the conversation at this time?
- Is your relative mentally able to cope with the conversation at this time?
- Is anyone else needed to support you or your relative? And if so, are they available?
- Do you need any rules or boundaries? Such as a time limit on the conversation?

During a conversation it may help to:

- Ask questions to understand how they are feeling.
- Repeat your relative's words back to them in your own words. This shows that you are listening. Repeating information can also make sure that you have understood them properly.
- Acknowledge concerns without judgement.
- Let them know that you care and they aren't alone.
- Stay calm and empathetic.
- Tackle one issue at a time.
- Stay on topic.
- Ask them if you can do anything to help.
- Be mindful of your language. It can help to use 'I think' and 'I feel' statements when you share your point of view, rather than language like 'you never' or 'you should'.

Following the conversation, it may help to:

- Make notes of anything important and any actions you have agreed to do, individually or together.
- Try to set aside some time for yourself to reflect on the conversation and unwind. Especially if you found the conversation difficult to deal with.
- Things may have been raised during the discussion that you don't know the answer to. Finding out answers to questions can be helpful and reassuring for both you and your relative.
- Make sure that you follow up on any agreements that you made during your conversation. If you can't follow up on agreements talk to your relative to explain why.

### **What can I do if my relative doesn't want to talk?**

You can still offer emotional support to someone without talking. Let them know you are there to listen, if and when they are ready.

Offering to spend time with your relative or doing something together lets them know that you care. Talking about topics unrelated to mental health can help to develop a relationship and improve trust.

Practical help can also improve how someone feels. Offering practical support may help them feel less alone or overwhelmed. Examples include:

- helping with form filling
- helping them to open their post
- helping to find local support groups
- helping them prepare for a medical appointment
- taking them to appointments or social activities.

[Top](#)

#### 4. How can I encourage my relative to get treatment?

You might find that your relative doesn't want to get treatment for their symptoms. You may find this difficult and frustrating.

There are lots of reasons someone may not want to seek support, for example:

- they don't think they need help and things will get better on their own
- they don't think treatment will work
- they don't understand they are unwell
- they are scared of what will happen to them if they tell their doctor how they feel
- they are worried what other people might think
- they are worried it will affect their job or education
- they feel hopeless
- they are reluctant because of past experiences.

If someone you care for doesn't want to get help you could try to:

- Talk to them about how they feel. See [section 3](#) of this factsheet for ideas on how to start a conversation with your relative.
- Explain why you would like them to see a health professional. For example, you are worried because they don't seem to be themselves.
- Explain what kind of help they could get.
- Offer to help them talk to their doctor or offer to talk to their doctor before their appointment.
- Offer to wait for your relative in the waiting area.

Support through the NHS isn't the only option for someone to get support for how they are feeling. Charities may be able to offer support, or your relative may be able to support themselves with lifestyle changes.

You could read the following for information about the kinds of help that they can receive, or for ideas for how to phrase sensitive topics.

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on these topics:

- Worried about someone's mental health?
- Persuading someone to speak to their doctor

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

#### Can my relative be given treatment even if they don't want it?

Nobody can force your relative to get treatment. Everyone has the right to accept or decline both physical and mental health treatment.

The only time that someone can be given mental health treatment against their will is if they are assessed as needing to be detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act. This is sometimes called being 'sectioned.'

You can find more information about '**Mental Health Act**' at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) . Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

### **How can I get treatment for my relative if they are in mental health crisis?**

To get support you can contact:

- your relative's GP
- your relative's urgent mental health line. [www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline)
- Your relatives local safeguarding team. Part of the local authority
- 999 and ask for an ambulance if there is imminent risk to life.

It may help to focus your conversation with professionals on risk, you can think about:

- How long has your relative been behaving this way?
- Have they tried to harm themselves or others?
- Have they stopped eating, drinking or bathing?
- Do you have any evidence to support the behaviour? such as social media posts.
- What may happen if they don't get support?
- What is the likelihood of this happening?

### How do I manage symptoms of psychosis?

If your relative has delusions or paranoid beliefs, they may be having an episode of psychosis.

During an episode of psychosis, it may be difficult to get them to seek support and treatment for different reasons. They may feel well and not understand why you are concerned. Or they may believe that other people, such as family, carers and health professionals, are plotting against them.

When speaking to someone with psychosis keep in mind that their experiences are real to them. Even if their experiences do not reflect reality. It might help to listen and acknowledge the distress they may be experiencing.

You may be able to self-refer your relative to an early intervention team or other mental health team if this is the first time that they have experienced psychosis.<sup>2</sup>

Early intervention teams specialise in helping people who experience psychosis for the first time. But they aren't available in all areas of England.

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on these topics:

- Getting help in a mental health crisis
- NHS mental health teams
- Responding to unusual behaviour linked to mental illness
- Psychosis

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

[Top](#)

## **5. How can I help my relative to stay independent?**

Independence can help people to have more choice and control over their lives. Empowering people to be independent can enhance wellbeing and confidence.

The care and support that you give to your relative should be reviewed regularly. Sometimes giving support can make people more dependent on care, rather than aiding recovery.

To help your relative to stay or become independent you could try the following:

- Set boundaries
- Support them to set and reach achievable goals
- Support them to complete tasks

Encourage your relative to:

- Talk to their GP, link worker or mental health team about additional support to live independently. Such as an occupational therapist or floating support.
- Be socially connected. See [section 6](#) for more information.
- Be physically active. See [section 6](#) for more information.
- Get money they are entitled to and manage it. See [section 7](#) for more information.
- Apply for a personal health budget through their GP, care team or integrated care board for health and wellbeing needs.<sup>3</sup>
- Apply for direct payments through local authority to pay for social care needs. The local authority will assess care needs to see if they are eligible.<sup>4</sup>

The aim of health budgets is to give people more control and choice about how money to meet their wellbeing and care needs is spent.

Your relative will receive something called an integrated budget if they receive funding from both the NHS and local authority.

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on personal budget and floating support:

- Social care – direct payments
- Housing options

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

[Top](#)

## **6. How can I encourage my relative to socialise and look after their physical health?**

A healthy diet, exercise and social contact are important for everyone. It can help improve mood, physical health and help with medication side effects.

You could:

- Talk to your relative about physical activity and social contact. Find out what sorts of things they are interested in and offer to help them. It might be helpful to create a step-by-step plan with them. Or offer to find a local support service.
- Encourage your relative to speak to their doctor or health worker about local NHS programmes to support diet, physical health and social connection.
- Encourage your relative to speak to a link worker. A link worker will be able to tell your relative about local support to improve mental wellbeing. Your relative may be able to refer themselves to a local link worker. Or they can get a referral from their doctor or health professional.
- Invite your relative to do an activity with you, such as going for a walk, the gym, choir practice or an art class.
- Encourage your relative to attend local community kitchens for healthy food, cooking tips and meeting others.

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on:

- Physical activity and mental health
- Social inclusion and mental health

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

## 7. How can I help my relative to manage money and find employment?

### What financial support is available for my relative?

Your relative may be entitled to financial support such as welfare benefits, local grants, schemes such as council tax reduction.

Help with health costs may be available, such as free NHS prescriptions, dental treatment, and eye tests.<sup>5</sup>

Help with travel and leisure costs may also be available such as blue parking badge, bus pass, discounted travel or leisure passes.

You can find more information about benefit entitlement on the **Mental Health and Money Advice** website.

[Advice for someone with mental health and money problems : Mental Health & Money Advice \(mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org\)](https://mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org)

### How can I help my relative to manage their finances?

You could help someone to:

- create a weekly budget
- use 'jam jar' accounts
- plan which bills need to be paid
- set up direct debits for bills
- talk to a money advice service for further support
- set up an appointee through the DWP to manage welfare benefits
- set up a Lasting Power of Attorney for finance and property through the Office of the Public Guardian

You can find more information about budgeting and jam jar accounts on the **Mental Health and Money Advice** website.

[How do I manage my money if I have mental health problems? : Mental Health & Money Advice \(mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org\)](https://mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org)

### Employment support

Employment, volunteering or study opportunities can all be beneficial for good mental wellbeing. They help with social interaction, feeling purposeful and learning new skills.

If your relative is interested in support into employment, you could tell them about services and schemes such as:

- Individual placement and support services. These are specialist services to help people with mental illness into employment.
- Access to Work grant. This helps people with mental illness into employment with financial support.

Go to [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) for information on employment, volunteering and study:

- **Work and mental illness – getting a job**
- **Studying and mental illness**

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

[Top](#)

## **8. How can I deal with unwanted behaviour?**

Certain unwanted behaviours can be difficult to deal with for both you and your relative.

Unwanted behaviours can include things like:

- misusing drugs or alcohol
- withdrawing from people
- staying in bed for long periods of time
- smoking a lot
- being aggressive towards you or other people
- self-harming
- not taking medication

These behaviours can strain the relationship between you and your relative.

Depending on the behaviour it might help to:

- Talk to your relative to find out how they are feeling. See [section 3](#) for more information about how to start a conversation.
- Help your relative to achieve goals that are important to them. This may involve finding local services to offer support or helping to create a daily routine.
- Consider family intervention or counselling to help understand each other and move forwards.
- Work together to come up with an agreement that feels manageable for both of you.

The agreement could outline the following from both your side and your relative's side, for example:

- the behaviour that will be supported,
- the agreed approach for how the behaviour will be supported,
- what will happen if agreed actions are not followed, and
- how to work together to review the agreement.

It can be hard to get a working agreement at first, but don't give up. Work together until you have an agreement that you are both willing to try.

If your relative has complex mental health needs, ask their mental health team for specific advice about how to support them.

You can find out more about:

- Responding to unusual behaviour linked to mental illness
- Self-harm
- Drugs, alcohol and mental health

at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org). Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask for a copy to be sent to you.

[Top](#)

### **9. How can I prepare to support someone in a mental health crisis?**

Support your relative to create a crisis plan. Ideally a crisis plan should be made before someone is in crisis. But it's never too late to start.

A crisis plan is plan of action. Work with your relative to think about what support they find helpful when they are beginning to become unwell or are in crisis. Write down the names and contact details of people who would be able to help them.

You may find it useful to have your own copy of their crisis plan. You can make your own notes if it's helpful.

If your relative is being supported by a mental health team, they might already have a crisis plan in place. You can ask them to show you their crisis plan if they have one. But it is your relative's choice whether they show you.

There is no set way for how a crisis plan should look. There is a crisis plan template at the [end of this factsheet](#) that you can use.

[Top](#)

### **10. How can I help someone who is suicidal?**

When supporting someone with suicidal thoughts you can try some of the following things:

- Ask them about how they are feeling and listen.
- Let them know that you care about them and that they are not alone.
- Be non-judgemental and don't criticise or blame them.
- Ask how you can help.
- Take note of any specific plans they might have to end their life.

- Ask them about things that are stopping them from acting on suicidal thoughts. You might be able to find some positive things for them to focus on.
- Make or follow a crisis plan
- Encourage them to seek help that they are comfortable with. Such as from a doctor or counsellor, or support through a charity such as the Samaritans.
- Get urgent help by calling 999 if there is immediate risk of harm.

You can find out more about:

- Suicidal thoughts – how to support someone
- Getting help for someone in a mental health crisis

at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org). Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask for a copy to be sent to you.

[Top](#)

## 11. How can I plan for the future?

There may be a time when you are no longer willing or able to care for your relative.

You may wish to start planning for their future:

- financial support, and
- health and care support

### Financial support

To offer future financial support to your relative you could set up a discretionary trust as part of your will.

A discretionary trust means that your relative does not get their inheritance paid directly to them when you die. You appoint trustees, who manage the money for your relative. You can choose who you would like to be a trustee, such as a family member.

Putting money into a discretionary trust should mean your relative's income related benefits, and social support entitlement won't be affected when you die.<sup>6</sup>

### Can I set up a discretionary trust with Rethink for my relative?

Rethink Trust Corporation (RTC) understands the needs of people with mental illness. They can give your relative a secure financial future and peace of mind for you.

If you have any questions or would like more information about setting up a trust fund with RTC you can contact them on:

- **Phone:** 01458 258841

- **Email:** [trusts@rethinktrustcorporation.com](mailto:trusts@rethinktrustcorporation.com)

You can download their information booklet here:  
<https://www.rethink.org/media/6278 rtc-a-guide-to-rethink-trusts.pdf>

You can view their webpage here: [www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/carers-hub/rethink-trust-corporation](http://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/carers-hub/rethink-trust-corporation)

Where else can I get information?

You can find information on the **Mental Health and Money Advice** website [www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org](http://www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org) on 'How do I make a will or trust fund?'

### Health and care support

Your relative's future support for healthcare and social care is likely to be provided through:

- NHS
- Social services
- Local charities

You can find more information about '**Planning for future – your relative's care and support**' at [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) . Or call 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy.

[Top](#)

## Useful Contacts

### Carers UK

Carers UK run an advice line, offer online support, and carers groups throughout the UK.

**Telephone:** 020 7378 4999

**Address:** 20 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX

**Email via contact form on website:** [www.carersuk.org/contact-us/](http://www.carersuk.org/contact-us/)

**Website:** [www.carersuk.org/](http://www.carersuk.org/)

### Carers Trust

This is a charity which was formed by joining The Princess Royal Trust for Carers and Crossroad Care. Their website gives practical advice about caring for someone.

**Telephone:** 0300 772 9600

**Address:** 2-6 Boundary Row, London SE1 8HP

**Email:** [info@carers.org](mailto:info@carers.org)

**Website:** [www.carers.org/](http://www.carers.org/)

### Citizens Advice

They give free confidential information and advice to help with legal, debt, consumer, housing and welfare benefit problems in the UK.

**Website:** [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/)

### **Samaritans**

They offer emotional support. They can be contacted by telephone, letter, e-mail and mini-com. There's also a face-to-face service, available at their local branches. They are open 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

**Telephone:** 116 123

**Email:** [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Website:** [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### **Silverline**

They offer a free confidential helpline for older people across the UK.. They offer telephone friendship and conversation. that's open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

**Telephone:** 0800 470 80 90

**Website:** [www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)

### **GOV.UK**

This is a website where you can find government services and information. The link below has information on many issues related to caring for someone, including financial affairs and carers' rights.

**Website:** [www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities/carers](http://www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities/carers)

Your local council may keep a directory of local carers groups and services in your area.

---

<sup>1</sup> VoiceAbility. Carer's Advocacy. <https://www.voiceability.org/about-advocacy/types-of-advocacy/carers-advocacy> (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023).

<sup>2</sup>. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. *Psychosis and schizophrenia in adults: prevention and management*. Clinical Guidance 178. London: National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; 2014. Para 1.3.1.2

<sup>3</sup> NHS. *Personal Health Budgets FAQ* [www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/personal-health-budgets/frequently-asked-questions-about-phbs/#how-can-someone-get-a-personal-health-budget](http://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/personal-health-budgets/frequently-asked-questions-about-phbs/#how-can-someone-get-a-personal-health-budget) (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023)

<sup>4</sup> NHS. *Personal budgets and direct payments*. [www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/money-work-and-benefits/personal-budgets/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/money-work-and-benefits/personal-budgets/) (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Gov.uk. *Get help with NHS prescriptions and health costs*. [www.gov.uk/help-nhs-costs](http://www.gov.uk/help-nhs-costs) (accessed 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023).

---

<sup>6</sup> Department of Health and Housing Options. *Discretionary trusts a guide for families*. See 'Why doesn't everyone set up a Discretionary Trust?' P 15. [www.sheffieldmencap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/discretionary\\_trusts\\_a\\_guide\\_for\\_families-2010.pdf](http://www.sheffieldmencap.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/discretionary_trusts_a_guide_for_families-2010.pdf)

## APPENDIX

### EXAMPLE OF A BASIC CRISIS PLAN

What could happen	What to do	Who to contact
X shows signs of self-harm	Call Care Coordinator - day Call crisis team number - night	Miss T care coordinator (phone number) Mr S at the crisis team (phone number)
X tries to overdose	Call 999	Emergency services 999

#### Early signs of relapse:

- Starts to send texts, or post on social media in the middle of the night.
- Texts and social media posts have regular spelling and grammatical errors. Often opinionated.
- Looks tired
- more irritable
- Doesn't take all medication.

#### Signs of mental health crisis:

- Hasn't taken all medication for over 4 days in a row
- X starts going out by himself at night
- Social media posts are becoming more frequent
- Hasn't slept for well for over 1 week

#### What to do when there are signs of relapse and mental health crisis:

- Ask X how they are doing.
- Encourage X to talk about their social media posts to understand how they are doing
- Ask how X is sleeping. Encourage good sleep hygiene
- Ask about medication, how is X finding taking the medication? any side effects? any changes to medication?
- Ask X if he would like to get support for how feeling, such as doctor.
- Tell certain people that X spends time with about concerns
- Contact 999 if immediate risk to life

#### Details of current medication to give to staff:

Clozapine 400mg

#### Previous treatments:

Olanzapine 2010-2012, Risperidone 2012-2014, Clozapine from 2014

#### Contacts:

X's crisis team – worker's name is Mr S – (phone number)

Emergency services – 999

X's GP surgery – GP's name is Mrs L – (phone number)

X's CMHT – Care coordinator is Miss T – (phone number)

#### People I can speak to if I need to:

Care coordinator

Friends

Relatives

My doctor

Local Support Group Helpline numbers and Samaritans

This factsheet is available in large print.

## Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service

**Phone 0808 801 0525**  
**Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm**  
**(excluding bank holidays)**

**Email [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)**



**Patient Information Forum**

### Did this help?

We'd love to know if this Information helped you

**Drop us a line at:** [feedback@rethink.org](mailto:feedback@rethink.org)

**or write to us at Rethink Mental Illness:**  
RAIS

PO Box 18252

Solihull

B91 9BA

**or call us on 0808 801 0525**

We're open 9:30am to 4pm

Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)

### Need more help?

Go to [rethink.org](https://rethink.org) for information on symptoms, treatments, money and benefits and your rights.

### Don't have access to the web?

Call us on 0121 522 7007. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and we will send you the information you need in the post.

### Need to talk to an adviser?

If you need practical advice, call us on: 0808 801 0525 between 9:30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Our specialist advisers can help you with queries like how to apply for benefits, get access to care or make a complaint.

### Can you help us to keep going?

We can only help people because of donations from people like you. If you can donate please go to [rethink.org/donate](https://rethink.org/donate) or call 0121 522 7007 to make a gift. We are very grateful for all our donors' generous support.



**Equality, rights, fair treatment, and the maximum quality of life for all those severely affected by mental illness.**

For further information on Rethink Mental Illness Phone 0121 522 7007  
Email [info@rethink.org](mailto:info@rethink.org)



**[rethink.org](https://rethink.org)**



Registered with  
FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR



CYBER  
ESSENTIALS



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE  
We invest in people Silver

