

HOW TO GET HELP FOR COMPLEX PTSD ON THE NHS

INFORMATION FOR SUFFERERS

By Bedfordshire charity – Recovery Code X



Survivor led
For the people
By the people



ARE YOU BATTLING overwhelming feelings including shame, unable to control your emotions, and experiencing loss of concentration?

If money worries, avoiding certain stressful people and places, and now – Covid, are more than you can handle, you may have Complex PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). This factsheet provides information on help available from the NHS.

You've got this!



Free Help with NHS

The NHS recognises Complex PTSD as a distinct condition and offers a range of services for helping traumatised people get through a difficult time.

East London

NHS Foundation Trust

There are several approaches available for developing a roadmap towards recovery.

The following information has been produced with assistance from staff at the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) and www.england.nhs.uk.



Contact your GP

Contact your GP and explain to them what you are experiencing. Say you think you may have Complex PTSD. You could bring (or email) your GP a copy of our factsheet: 'Are you experiencing Complex PTSD symptoms?' Your GP can make referrals to support services depending on your needs. Options include:

- A mental health clinician attached to your surgery
- Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service
- Social prescribing scheme - connecting you to council-run community services or a local charity
- Community Mental Health Team

If financial/legal/employment problems or physical health difficulties are impacting your current mental health difficulties, these may need to be addressed first.



Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service

Alternatively, you can go directly to Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service which provides free short-term telephone and online counselling. There are also free seminars, online courses and groups covering a range of topics. At present, these include: Mood Management course, Overcoming Depression Group, First Steps to Change – Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Group and more.

Access their services by filling in an online form:

<https://bedfordshirewellbeingsservice.nhs.uk>

Or phone 01234 880400 Option 2

Mapping a better future



Phase 1: Psychoeducation and stabilisation

NHS treatment usually begins with understanding what you are experiencing – a process called ‘psychoeducation’.

You may be offered the chance to learn coping strategies to help stabilise your emotions in a group format. You will not be asked to share or process traumatic material in the group.

Phase 2: Trauma processing

After this, a psychologist or therapist will consider whether it would be helpful for you to do trauma processing, where treatment sessions focus on past traumatic memories.

Trauma-focused Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) and EMDR, which stands for Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, are offered for Complex PTSD.

Phase 3: Future Planning

The treatment ends with ongoing future planning, referrals and relapse prevention.

If medication is considered appropriate, it will be offered via your GP or specialist mental health practitioners such as psychiatrists or senior mental health nurses.

The assessment

You will be asked questions about your mental health and your past so that the doctor or therapist can understand your problems. He/she will normally enquire about other issues that could be impacting you, such as relationships, education and employment, financial, housing, physical health, and care needs.

Mental Health Teams

Your GP or other service may refer you to the Community Mental Health Teams where there are multidisciplinary professionals including mental health nurses, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, therapists, occupational therapists and support workers.

These teams provide services to people whose needs require input from more than one type of specialist professional.



Other counselling in Bedford

Open Door (for young people aged 13-25) – Free counselling
www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk

The Counselling Foundation - charges on a sliding scale according to income: www.counsellingfoundation.org

Bedford Counselling & Training - charges on a fee scale
www.bcat-team.org.uk

Path 2 Recovery

If you have substance misuse and/or addiction problems, they may put you in touch with Path 2 Recovery, based in Bedford. You can self-refer or get a referral from your GP.

Contact Path 2 Recovery on 0333 332 4019

Email: Elft.p2rsupportsystems@nhs.net

Bedfordshire and Luton Recovery College

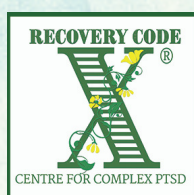
The Bedfordshire and Luton Recovery College offers free online self-care workshops, personal development courses and peer support groups. Some face-to-face sessions may be available soon. Part of the Bedfordshire Mental Health Academy.

Contact Recovery College for a brochure.

Tel: 01234 263621/ 01582 708917

Email: elft.recoverycollege@nhs.net

This factsheet is also available in audio as a podcast on our website. See:
www.recoverycodex.org/factsheets



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This factsheet has been created thanks to the National Lottery Awards for All.

Need help urgently?

If you're in crisis you can contact NHS mental health services on telephone number 111 and select option 2. A mental health professional will review your situation and decide with you the level of support you need.

The line is open 24 hours a day.