

Jargon Buster

It is often confusing and bewildering when entering mental health services. Professionals sometimes use terms, acronyms and abbreviations that may be unfamiliar and confusing. However, if someone is speaking to you and using abbreviations or unknown phrases – you can always ask them to explain what is meant by the expression or the term.

There is no need to feel that you will look foolish or ignorant; people often forget that not everybody uses the same language on a daily basis. In this section is a list of some of the more common terms used.

Acute ward A hospital ward which is responsible for assessing and treating someone in crisis. Patients may be admitted 'informally' or under a section of the Mental Health Act for assessment and treatment. The door may be locked for the safety of the patients. Informal patients are free to come and go but someone under a section would need permission to leave the ward. The length of stay is usually short and there is a dedicated ward team.

Advance statement This is a document that sets out an agreement between the mental health team and your relative stating what should happen in a crisis. It also includes information about what support they would like from other people. This document is drawn up with the service user when they are well. The aim of the document is to support self-management during a crisis and it also gives information about what treatment the

service user would like should they become very unwell. Additionally it can be helpful in preventing conflict over confidentiality issues between families and professionals should the service user experience an acute crisis.

Advocate A person who can support a service user, or carer, through their contact with health and social care services. Advocates will attend meetings with service users/carers and help them express their concerns or wishes to healthcare professionals. As a carer you can sometimes act as an informal advocate for your friend, partner or relative. There are also specialist advocate services, see 'IMHA' below.

Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP)

Each local authority has a responsibility to provide sufficient numbers of specifically trained and approved professionals 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. This is an enhanced role and different from the usual job of social workers and community psychiatric nurses.

Assessment This is the process which identifies what needs an individual has. It includes looking at the impact their mental health problems have on their physical health, social needs, occupational needs, daily living and quality of life. This may involve a number of different professionals assessing different areas.

Atypical anti-psychotic medication These are newer forms of anti-psychotic medication used to treat psychosis. Some of the more frequently prescribed are Amisulperide, 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.

Care coordinator This is the member of the mental health team who will coordinate the care plan and act as the link and contact for your relative wherever they are receiving treatment, eg in a hospital setting or in the community.

Care Programme Approach (CPA) This is the process for planning and monitoring the care of someone recovering from the effects of severe mental health problems who is considered to be a vulnerable member of society. The central features of the CPA are:

- an assessment of need involving the service user and carer/s, if appropriate
- the allocation of a care coordinator
- carrying out an agreed care plan
- review of the care plan – this should be yearly, or more often if necessary.

Care review meeting see Ward round.

Clinical psychologist Someone who can use psychological knowledge and techniques to help in understanding, assessing and working with mental health disorders.

Clinician Someone who provides care and treatment to patients, such as a nurse, psychiatrist or psychologist

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) a time-based talking therapy that looks at the relationship between people's thoughts, feelings and actions.

Community mental health team (CMHT) The main providers of specialist mental health services within the community. The teams include Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists, Community Psychiatric Nurses, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists, all of whom will work jointly in trying to develop a care plan to meet the needs of the person using the services.

Community psychiatric nurse (CPN) are nurses who assess people's mental health and work with people with mental health disorders and their families to plan supportive treatment in the community. They can also administer medication and provide information and/or referrals to other services and support networks locally.

Co-morbidity Other co-existing illness in addition to the particular mental health disorder which is currently most significant.

Crisis and home treatment team this is a team who can offer treatment and support in the community as alternative to in-patient hospital admission. Its aim is to provide short-term treatment in the home to resolve a short-term or minor crisis. Sometimes called a Crisis resolution team (CRT).

Depot injection Long acting medication administered by intramuscular injection, it is often used where people are unable or unwilling to take tablets regularly.

Dual diagnosis This term is usually used when there is a mental disorder with alcohol and/ or illegal drug use. It can sometimes be used

when someone also has a diagnosis of a learning disability and a mental health disorder.

Early intervention service A specialist team that provides intensive support for people who have experienced a first or second episode of psychosis. The aim is to work with the service user and their family to support recovery and prevent relapse in order to improve long-term health and wellbeing.

Electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) This is a treatment which can be used for severe depression where medication has failed. ECT is always administered under general anaesthetic and produces a mild shock to the brain. People are often concerned when ECT is discussed, but administered in the right way it can be an extremely effective, life-saving treatment. The use of ECT is strictly controlled under a combination of the Mental Health Act 1983 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Emergency duty team (EDT) This team provides an emergency social work service outside of office hours at night, weekends and bank holidays. The team will include an AMHP if you require an assessment under the Mental Health Act out of office hours.

Forensic services are for people who commit criminal offences while mentally unwell. These services are very specialist and they will have high security. The Mental Health Act has specific sections for people held in forensic services.

Holistic considers the whole person in the treatment of the disorder – that is their physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual and social needs.

Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHAs) are specialist advocates who are trained to

work within the framework of the Mental Health Act 1983. IMHAs are completely independent of any person or service that is involved with the patient's treatment or care, and provide their services free of charge. Anybody held under a section of the Mental Health Act is entitled to use the services of an IMHA and they should be informed of this right.

Informal patient This is a term used to describe someone who has chosen to go to an acute ward during a crisis but they are not detained under a section of the Mental Health Act. An informal patient is free to leave the ward at any time. If there is concern that they may have become a risk to themselves or others whilst on the ward, nurses and doctors have the power to hold them for a limited period of time until they can be assessed under the Mental Health Act.

Insight This is a term which can be used when the person with a mental disorder has developed a good understanding of their illness. **Lack of insight** is a term which can be used to refer to someone who does not believe they have a mental health disorder.

Mental Health Act 1983 You may have heard of somebody 'being sectioned' – this term refers to someone being placed under a section of the Mental Health Act. The Mental Health Act allows certain mental healthcare 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 most commonly used sections of the Mental Health Act are:

Section 2 This is a period of assessment in hospital that lasts for up to 28 days. It can be applied for by an

Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) 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. If a service user has been under a Section 3 they are entitled to free aftercare from health and social services when they return to the community. Application is similar to Section 2.

Nearest relative is the family member who can use the rights and powers given to them under the Mental Health Act. The Mental Health Act sets out a list of people who are entitled to be the nearest relative giving the order of priority that is used by law. A nearest relative can formally request an assessment under The Mental Health Act if they believe their relative is a danger to themselves or others.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produces treatment guidelines based on the most effective treatments recognised for different mental health disorders (and other health conditions).

Occupational therapist (OT) OTs are trained to work with people to help them to improve their ability to cope with daily living as independently as possible. They assess practical skills, improve coping strategies and help to encourage participation in recreational, educational and vocational activities.

Peer support workers have lived experience of mental health problems. The role is relatively new and it involves working alongside

someone with a mental health problem to provide hope and a vision of recovery. They are trained to share their own experiences.

Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) is a secure hospital ward that offers intensive assessment and treatment for people in severe crisis. This service is only for people cared for under a section of the Mental Health Act. Like intensive care units in general hospitals, there is a dedicated team for the unit and there is a high staff to patient ratio.

Psychiatrist A medical doctor who has trained and specialised in psychiatry – the branch of medicine concerned with mental health, diagnosis, treatment and care. Psychiatrists will be responsible for diagnosing the mental health disorder and choosing the appropriate medication for your relative.

Psychosis A broad term that describes a severe mental health disorder where a person loses touch with reality. Their emotional responses, thinking processes, judgement and ability to communicate are so affected that day-to-day living becomes unmanageable. Each individual's experiences of psychosis can be quite different and it is often valuable to talk to the person about what it is like for them.

Service user This is someone who uses mental health services. Other common terms are patient, service survivor and client.

Social Worker Provides support to people who are socially excluded or experiencing a crisis. They can act as a guide, advocate or critical friend to service users and their families. Part of the care team who is able to make a valuable contribution by advising on issues such as people's legal rights and entitlements.

Voluntary organisations Bodies governed by

unpaid members, registered as charities with some paid members of staff. These are some voluntary organisations which are specifically helpful for people experiencing mental health problems:

- Mind
- Rethink Mental Illness
- Samaritans
- Saneline

Ward Round This is an old fashioned term for a meeting on a ward which is now referred to as a 'care review meeting'. At the meeting different professionals meet with your relative to review their care and treatment on the ward and to decide when they should be discharged. You are entitled to attend the meeting if your relative would like you to come. Your relative can also request an independent professional advocate, or IMHA, to attend the meeting if they would find this helpful.