

**Information for patients about primary care psychological therapies services**

**What is IAPT**

IAPT stands for Improving Access to Psychological Therapy and is an NHS initiative designed to make psychological or talking therapies more accessible to people experiencing common mental health or emotional difficulties. The psychological therapies offered are treatments approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).  This means they are proven to be effective treatments for difficulties such as depression, anxiety or stress.

**What support is offered in an IAPT service?**

IAPT services offer a range of interventions depending on what the person needs. The interventions will vary depending on the area but are likely to include:

* Psychological therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) or Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR), or Interpersonal Therapy
* Counselling
* Guided self-help
* Workshops to help you deal with stress, worry, panic and other common mental health difficulties

**Who is the service for?**

One in four of us will be affected by emotional difficulties or mental health problems at some point in our lives. IAPT services have been developed to provide talking therapies for anyone who is:

* Feeling down, low or depressed
* Feeling stressed or anxious
* Finding it hard to control worrying
* Anxious in social situations
* Anxious about your own health
* Experiencing panic attacks
* Experiencing flashbacks of traumatic events
* Caught up in excessive washing or checking

**Is there an IAPT service in my area?**

In your local area there will be an IAPT service although it might have a different name, e.g. Psychological Therapies Service, the Health in Mind, Compass Wellbeing or Time to Talk. Details of local IAPT services are available on NHS Choices website.

You can find services near you by entering your postcode on the website below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Psychological%20therapies%20%28IAPT%29/LocationSearch/10008>

**How can I be referred?**

IAPT services usually accept self-referrals so you can call the service yourself and request this. Alternatively, you can see your GP and ask for a referral. Many IAPT services offer a telephone screening appointment as the first step to establish the type of intervention that might be most suitable for you. If you struggle to explain to your GP what it is that you need, you can take this leaflet to your GP to help them understand.

**What if I need urgent help?**

IAPT is not an emergency service. If you need urgent help please contact either your GP or attend the A and E Department of your local hospital (24hrs), or call 999. For emotional support please call the free Samaritans 24 hour helpline on 116 123 or 0845790 90 90 or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org).