



November 2005



DETECT/DELTA Early Intervention in Psychosis

Fact sheet 2

What can family and friends do?

Are you concerned that someone close to you is becoming unwell? Has something changed about the way they are thinking, feeling or behaving?

In the early stages of psychosis there may be some noticeable changes in the way a person functions on a daily basis or interacts with others. The person may be acting strangely or talking about unusual experiences, they may be more withdrawn socially or emotionally or there may be other behaviours that family and friends are worried about.

Here are some of the signs to look for if you think someone close to you is developing a psychosis:

Special points of interest:

- Psychosis is a treatable condition.
- Psychosis affects 3 in every 100 people
- The earlier you receive effective treatment the better
- Your GP will know how to help.

Psychosis is a common illness that can affect anyone but getting treatment early helps people to return to their normal lives.

Thinking	Feeling	Behaviour
Unusual thoughts/strange ideas	Depressed Mood	Being overactive/ or less active
Disturbed perceptions e.g. hallucinations	Anxious	Social Isolation/Withdrawal
Poor concentration	Irritable	Reduced ability to work/go to school
Inattentiveness	Suspicious/Paranoid	Sleeping or eating poorly
Sense of changed environment	Lack of expression of emotions verbal and non verbal	Odd/Strange behaviour
Confusion	Reduced Energy	Deterioration in personal hygiene
	Lack of Motivation	Drug or Alcohol Abuse

WHY GET HELP EARLY?

If someone appears to be experiencing these symptoms and they persist over time or become more intense then the person may be developing a psychosis. It may be nothing but it's better to get it checked out, don't wait and see. The reality is that it can take up to two years for people experiencing psychosis to get help. If left untreated psychosis can cause serious disruption to a person's life. This disruption can be minimised if people get help in time and with effective treatment people can return to their normal lives as soon as possible.

HOW DO I GET HELP?

If you think that someone close to you is suffering from the types of problems that have been described in this website you should approach the person involved about your concerns. This may be difficult if the person you are worried about is resisting your attempts to help as they do not think that they are unwell. However, your GP will be able to assist you by assessing the situation, make referrals to specialist mental health services and offer support and guidance.

