

# MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT OPTIONS

Questions you may wish to discuss with  
your mental health practitioner  
**Checklist for Consumers**



Mental Health  
Council of Australia

When talking to your mental health practitioner, there are questions that you could consider asking. You may not want to ask all of these questions. Tick those that you would like to ask.

## About the illness

- What is my condition/illness/diagnosis?

## If a diagnosis has been made

- What are the symptoms that suggest this condition/illness/diagnosis?
- What is known about the causes of this condition/illness?
- What tests have already been undertaken?
- Will there be any further tests?
- Will I recover? When?
- Where can I get written information about this illness?

## If a diagnosis has NOT YET been made

- What diagnoses are you considering?
- What tests have already been undertaken?
- Will I need to have further tests?
- When should I expect to be notified of a diagnosis?



This checklist is provided by the MHCA Pharma Collaboration  
The MHCA is the independent national representative body of the mental health sector in Australia.

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## About care and treatment

- What are the aims of my care and treatment?
- Where can I get written information about my care and treatment?
- Who will be responsible for my care (in addition to me)? What exactly will they be responsible for?
- Who else will be involved in my care and treatment?
- How will you ensure that there is regular communication between yourself and other practitioners involved in my care and treatment?
- What will my treatment consist of (i.e. medication, therapy or other)?
- Are there alternative treatment options if the suggested treatments do not work, or suit my lifestyle?
- What will happen if I refuse treatment?
- What are the signs and symptoms that I am becoming unwell again?
- What do I do if I am becoming unwell again?
- Who should I contact in an emergency?
- What can I do to help myself recover?
- Do you know any self-help techniques that will help my recovery?
- How do I get in contact with people who have the same illness?
- Are there any local support, self-help or advocacy groups that I could get in touch with?

## Sharing information

- My carer(s) is/are .....
- Will my carer, family and/or friends be involved in discussions concerning my care and treatment?
- What benefit will I get if my carer is involved in discussions about me?
- Does my carer have to be involved in discussions relating to my care and treatment?
- Can I decide what information relating to my care and treatment is shared with my carer?
- Can I refuse to allow my carer, family and/or friends to be involved in any discussions?



## About medications

- What is the name of the medication?
- Why have you chosen this medication?
- What will the medication do?
- How, when and how often will I need to take it?
- How long will I need to take it?
- What results can I expect from taking this medication?
- How much time or effort will it take to experience benefits?
- What is the normal dosage range for this medication?
- Why am I being prescribed more/less than the normal dosage range?
- Can I take a low dose and increase it when necessary?
- Why am I on different types of medication?
- What do I do if I forget to take the medication?
- What will happen if I stop taking the medication?
- What are the side effects of taking this medication?
- How can I manage the side effects?
- If I find the side effects are unmanageable, what can you do about managing or counteracting them?
- Are there any other medications that could be used if this one does not work?
- What other treatment options do I have?
- What symptoms would mean that the dose should be changed?
- Who will be monitoring my medication and how often?
- What specifically will be monitored (i.e. the effect, toxicity or something else)?
- How will I know if the medication is working or not?
- Does this medication have any known or suspected interactions with other medications, including over the counter and complementary medicines?
- Can I take this medication safely with the other medications I am already taking?
- Are there any foods or drinks that I should not consume while taking this medication? Why?
- Is this medication listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) or will there be a private cost to me?
- Where can I get written information about this medication?
- Can we make a time to review the progress and if necessary revise the treatment plan??

## About other treatments

- Are there any other treatments for this illness?
- What are they? Are they effective?
- What treatments will I be undertaking? When? Where? How often? With whom?
- How long will I need to undertake this treatment?
- How will I know if this treatment is working or not?
- Is this treatment subsidised by Medicare or will there be a private cost to me?
- Where can I get written information about this treatment?
- How will you ensure that there is regular communication between yourself and other practitioners involved in my care and treatment?
- Can we make a time to review progress and if necessary revise the treatment plan?

## About hospital admissions

- Will I need to be admitted to hospital? If so, for how long?
- If I go to hospital, which one will it be?
- Who will be taking care of my accommodation/family/pets/bills etc. while I am in hospital?
- What arrangements will be made for my care and treatment after discharge from hospital?

## Other questions I want to remember to ask:

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