

**Beat**  
Eating disorders

**CPD**<sup>®</sup>  
The CPD Certification Service

# **SPOTTING THE SIGNS**

**Commissioning Guide**

**[beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://beateatingdisorders.org.uk)**

## ABOUT THE COURSE

Spotting the Signs is a **CPD accredited** training programme for secondary, high, and post-primary school professionals that aims to improve the early intervention rates for people with eating disorders. Delivered by eating disorder clinicians with extensive experience in the field, it is designed to help staff working with pupils in KS3 and above identify signs a student might be developing or currently living with an eating disorder, how to approach conversations around eating disorders, navigating eating disorders in an educational environment and other important considerations.

## IN PERSON

The training can be delivered in-person within a single day from 9:30-16:30. The seven hour session (including breaks) led by one of our trained clinicians is suited to a maximum of 20 delegates to ensure participants are able to receive specific feedback and support for their own training needs.

## ONLINE

The training can be delivered online within a single day from 9:30-16:30, or split over two mornings, a week apart. The online seven hour session, or 2 x three and a half hour sessions, are suited to a maximum of 15 delegates to ensure participants are able to receive specific feedback and support for their own training needs.

## PRICING

Various factors effect the price of the training, including, the chosen delivery format and setting for the sessions (e.g. venue hire). Our Public Sector Commissioning Team are happy to provide you with a quote if you are interested in commissioning Spotting the Signs. You can contact them via their email: [PublicSectorCommissioning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:PublicSectorCommissioning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

*"Aside from the compelling topic, the whole day just left me feeling empowered and made me feel something that most training courses don't - that I can help the young people in my care with very little if any extra workload or sense of dread!"*

## WHY UNDERSTAND EATING DISORDERS?

While eating disorders can affect anyone of any age, school-age children are a particularly vulnerable group, and potential factors in an eating disorder's development, such as trouble with peers and academic pressure, can appear in the school environment.

We know that the earlier an eating disorder is treated, the better chance someone has of fully recovering. Educational establishments can take steps to address eating disorders at several levels with policies and practices, both in their curricula and with individuals at risk.

Staff knowledge and understanding are also key. Spotting the Signs expands the knowledge and awareness of professionals working schools of common symptoms and behaviours that can lead to eating disorders or signal the development of one, as well as how to talk to a pupil exhibiting them, engage their families, and support them to seek medical assessment.

*"The training was both informative and relevant to my setting, and I would highly recommend it to others. The trainer herself was helpful, showed compassion and had an in-depth knowledge of eating disorders."*



## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- An increased knowledge of each of the major eating disorders and the impact they can have day to day through voices of 'lived experience'.
- An understanding that eating disorders are a serious mental illness and the importance of early intervention.
- Confidence to raise awareness of risk factors & early warning signs.
- The ability to explore possible barriers and think about how these may be overcome to encourage early detection in schools.
- Understanding of the referral process for your local specialist Eating Disorder Service.
- An appreciation of the services Beat offers.

## CONTENT OVERVIEW

Spotting the Signs ensures delegates understand and can spot the signs and symptoms of eating disorders. It also focuses on giving the core tools required to provide effective support to aid early intervention. It focuses on the following areas:

Improved understanding of:

- The three main eating disorders – causes, prevalence.
- Physical, psychological, emotional, and behavioural signs and symptoms
- Effects of illness in other types of eating disorders and common co-morbidities e.g. Type 1 Diabetes.

Improved understanding of:

- Possible boundaries faced by students
- Sensitivities associated with each condition
- Factors that can increase the risk of a student developing an eating disorder e.g. Autistic Students

Improved confidence in:

- Making an empathic connection
- Approaching someone with identified symptoms
- Managing risks in a school setting
- Ability to act, to make a referral or to support someone affected



***"An informative, comprehensive and well-structured course delivering very good CPD value. Strong interactivity with a variety of case studies, activities, videos, and opportunities through discussion to boost learning and engagement throughout the course."***

## ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders destroy lives. They steal childhoods, devastate relationships and pull families apart. And they can be fatal. They are serious mental illnesses and include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder. There are at least **1.25 million people in the UK** with an eating disorder at any one time, with around **130,000 falling ill each year**. While more women are affected than men, and eating disorders commonly emerge during adolescence, they affect people of all ages, genders, and ethnicities.

On average, it takes someone over 3 years from falling ill before they seek treatment, followed by more than 6 years of waiting, therapy, semi-recovery and relapse before they get better. PwC estimates that this costs the NHS £4 billion per year. However, it doesn't have to be this way: if someone starts treatment early, they have a good chance of making a rapid and sustained recovery.

School-age children are at a particularly high risk of developing eating disorders, with the academic and peer pressures and transitions that come as part of school life among the possible triggers for these serious mental illnesses. School staff are ideally placed to spot the early signs of an eating disorder and help intervene. There are many areas of the curriculum where topics related to eating disorders can be included: Personal, Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE), media studies, physical education, drama and creative work all provide opportunities.

In a study by Beat of students with eating disorders:

- **39%** had to drop out or take a break from studies.
- **69%** had difficulties accessing treatment and support.

One Beat supporter described living with an eating disorder during their time at school (read more in our [Back To School Blog](#)):

*"The two things I noticed my eating disorder affected most during my time at school were my energy levels and concentration."*

## CONTACT US

Equip your staff with the knowledge and skills they need to make a real difference in the lives of those affected by eating disorders.

Contact us today to learn more and join us in the fight against eating disorders.

Get in touch with our Training team if you have further questions about the content of the programme via email at [training@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:training@beateatingdisorders.org.uk).

Get in touch with our Commissioning team if you would like to know our availability or receive a quote via email at [PublicSectorCommissioning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:PublicSectorCommissioning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk).

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