

Synergy Support Programme



One-to-one and family support for under 18s with an emerging eating disorder

Weekly 1-1 support sessions of 20 minutes plus 40 minutes of family support, delivered over 3 months by Specialist Advisors via Zoom.

Who is it for?

People aged between 14 and 17 with disordered eating that does not yet meet the diagnostic criteria for anorexia or bulimia nervosa and who are therefore not yet able to access treatment, but who are likely to worsen if left without support.

Intended outcome

Young people with emerging eating disorders are supported to reduce their disordered eating symptoms, avoid relapse and move towards recovery. Their families are empowered to play an optimum role in that process.

Details

Young people who have been assessed by the community eating disorder service or child and adolescent mental health service can be referred for Synergy if they meet the following criteria:

- First onset of illness with duration of no more than 1 year;
- No significant co-morbidities
- Low risk of self-harm
- No lower than 85% weight for height
- Full commitment and high motivation for change from all parents/carers/guardians: the primary care giver must attend all sessions, with the other partner (except in single parent settings) to attend at least 50% of sessions

The family's GP remains responsible for monitoring the young person's physical health

Beat's Specialist Support Officers provide support based on the principles of Family Based Treatment (FBT) and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for non-underweight individuals with eating disorders (CBT-T).

They provide psychoeducation around eating disorders on both a physical and emotional level, increasing awareness and understanding for all involved. The earlier sessions focus on the parents as the young person's centre of support and on establishing a regular eating plan, moving on to a focus on any body image or self-esteem issues and strategies to reduce any anxiety or other emotional concerns. The overarching aim is getting the young person a regular and healthy eating routine, managing anxieties, challenging beliefs around food and learning to manage emotions that drive eating problems. Regular questionnaires ensure that the support offered remains helpful.

Beat's carer information pack will be posted to all participating families, who will also receive information sheets at each session to support them to follow the programme.

More information

For more information about this service or a partnership with Beat, please contact the team via PublicSectorCommissioning@beateatingdisorders.org.uk.

This is one of a series of services which Beat provides in support of NHS eating disorder services. A full list is available at www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/commission-us.

Other services for people with eating disorders:

- Bolster: 1-1 telephone coaching for adults with emerging eating disorders
- Motivate: weekly support to help adults waiting for treatment to stay motivated
- Momentum guided self-help: NICE-recommended treatment for Binge Eating Disorder
- SharED peer support for young people: moderated 1-1 email support from a volunteer befriender

Beat and NHS working in partnership

Beat works with NHS partners to help people get into treatment faster and to achieve a quick and sustainable recovery. Our belief is that we can provide non-clinical support quickly, effectively and cheaply, leaving NHS clinicians more time to do the clinical work that they have been trained for.

We can provide some of our services to NHS partners free of charge. For other services we have to pass on our costs to you, but we never take a profit from our work with NHS partners.

We provide services in the following areas:

- Direct support to people with an eating disorder
- Training and support for family members and others caring for a loved one with an eating disorder
- Support and training for clinicians
- Strategic support to health care providers

All our services are developed in consultation with NHS and academic partners, and co-produced with our beneficiaries with guidance from our multidisciplinary Clinical Advisory Group of senior clinicians:

Abigail Cardwell (Lead Occupational Therapist, South West London and St George's Mental Health Trust)

Dr Erica Cini (Consultant Psychiatrist, East London Foundation Trust)

Sam Clark-Stone (Lead Clinician and Registered Mental Health Nurse, 2gether Trust)

Dr Fiona Duffy (Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Lead, NHS Lothian)

Sarah Fuller (Specialist Eating Disorder Dietitian, East London NHS Foundation Trust)

Jess Griffiths (Eating Disorders Practitioner and Clinical Lead, Beat)

Dr Menna Jones (Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Lead, Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust)

Dr Rhys Jones (Consultant Psychiatrist, Leeds and York Partnership)

Dr Dasha Nicholls (Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Clinical Lead, Central and North West London NHS Trust and East London NHS Trust)

Becca Randell (Kent, Surrey and Sussex Implementation Lead, Children's Mental Health - KSS Academic Health Science Network)

Dr Paul Robinson (Consultant Psychiatrist; Principal Teaching Fellow, University College London)

Professor Janet Treasure (Consultant Psychiatrist, South London and Maudsley Trust)

All services are delivered either by experienced eating disorder clinicians or by specially trained helpline advisors under the supervision of a clinician. Where suitable, they are co-delivered by Beat lived experience trainers and volunteers.

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