

Developing Dolphins



Training to empower carers to provide the best possible guidance as they help a loved one towards recovery

A series of 5 weekday evening sessions, delivered over Zoom by experienced eating disorder clinicians and lived experience tutors, in which parents and carers, using the 'New Maudsley method', are taught to gently 'swim' alongside their loved one, giving them guidance to make their own progress.

Who is it for?

Parents, partners, siblings, and other carers of a loved one of any age who has had an eating disorder for no more than 5 years.

Intended outcome

Carers will understand the eating disorder and be able to provide support in a manner suited to their situation, improving communications and helping their loved one to engage with treatment and achieve recovery.

Duration and intensity

One 2½ hour session each week for 5 weeks.

Details

The workshops will equip carers with the skills and knowledge needed to support a loved one suffering from an eating disorder and to help them to break free from the difficulties that prevent recovery.

The course is based on the principles of the New Maudsley method developed by Professor Janet Treasure, which proposes that interpersonal factors can develop within families and maintain the illness. The course engages the analogy of different animals' communication styles and encourages carers to be more like the dolphin, encouraging and supporting progress. It teaches skills including the use of motivational interviewing as a means of providing calm and compassionate meal support and engaging intrinsic motivation to change.

Carers are also taught the application of behaviour change principles and about the cognitive and emotional styles associated with eating disorder behaviour. Participants at previous Developing Dolphins courses reported a 71% increase in their skills and confidence to support their loved one's recovery from an eating disorder.

Carers receive an information pack and materials that they can refer to and continue to learn from in the long term, including Prof Janet Treasure's Skills-based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder.

"What we learnt was enormously helpful, and it was very comforting to meet other parents experiencing similar things to ourselves."

"It was really helpful and has made me feel much more positive and optimistic that things can change."

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 carers of people with eating disorders:

- ECHO: weekly 1-1 telephone peer coaching from a specially trained volunteer carer who has themselves previously supported someone to recovery from an eating disorder
- Nexus carer support: weekly coaching calls from a Beat Advisor.
- Solace: weekly video peer support groups facilitated by a clinician and a Lived Experience volunteer
- Raising Resilience: a follow-up to Developing Dolphins via weekly live workshops over Zoom to help carers tackle specific challenges

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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