

MAJOR NEW TRAINING PROGRAM TO EXPAND PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES WORKFORCE

Government sets out plans to deliver £170 million investment in talking therapies

Health Secretary Alan Johnson today unveiled plans for a major new programme to train an extra 3,600 Psychological Therapists.

The £170 million 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' programme is designed to help transform the lives of thousands of people with depression and anxiety disorders by offering them access to Cognitive Behavioural Therapies.

Improving access to psychological therapies is a Government priority and evidence shows therapy is as effective as drugs in the short-term and longer lasting in the long-term. NICE guidelines on treatment for depression and anxiety recommend psychological therapies as part of evidence-based stepped care.

The 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapies' programme will train a new workforce of therapists at two levels who will deliver:

- high intensity therapy for people with moderate to severe conditions.
- low intensity therapy for people with mild to moderate conditions.

Health Secretary Alan Johnson said:

“The national guidelines published today are an important step in securing access to psychological therapies for everyone who needs them.

“The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme has already captured the imagination of Primary Care Trusts up and down the country and is transforming the lives of thousands of people with depression and anxiety disorders in the areas that have been involved so far.

“This document describes how that transformation can begin to be delivered in every strategic health authority area over the next few years.”

By 2010/11, the NHS will spend £170m per year on psychological therapies, with more than £30m in 2008/09 and more than £100m in 2009/10. Over the next three years, this investment in Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) will mean:

- 900,000 more people treated for depression and anxiety.
- 450,000 of them are likely to be completely cured (as expected with NICE guidelines).
- 25,000 fewer people with mental health problems on sick pay and benefits.
- 3,600 more newly trained psychological therapists giving evidence-based treatment.
- all GP practices having access to psychological therapies as the programme rolls out.

Health Minister Ivan Lewis said:

“More than one in six people suffer from mental health problems such as anxiety, stress and depression at any one time and GPs spend a third of their time dealing with people with these common mental health problems.

“For many people, prescribing medication is a successful treatment but psychological therapies have proved to be as effective as drugs in tackling these common mental health problems and are often more effective in the longer term.

“Today’s guidance is another step towards giving people with mental health problems a real choice of treatment, helping to reduce dependence on medication.”

Mike Farrar, CE Executive, NHS North West and SHA representative on the IAPT Programme Board said:

“Substantial additional investment in building new psychological therapies services has been secured, and this Implementation Plan provides clarity about the form and nature of the services that need to be established. The NHS now has the resources and the tools to implement NICE guidelines for depression and anxiety disorders.

“It is now up to us in the NHS to lead the delivery of these new services, ensuring that we embed these changes with a wider improvement of primary care and mental health services.

“This is an ambitious plan, but one that I am confident that the NHS can achieve, demonstrating our ability to rise to the challenge of delivering innovative, world-class services which meet the needs of society in the 21st Century.’

Jeremy Clark, from the New Savoy Partnership (NSP), which represents the main professional bodies involved with the programme said:

“The New Savoy Partnership is delighted to help launch the IAPT Implementation Plan, which will ensure that people who use the new services will have a real choice of effective psychological treatments. This is landmark moment in the history of NHS provision of mental health and social care, and we have pledged to work with the Government to ensure that this makes a real difference to everybody who needs these services.’

Angela Greatley, chief executive of the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health and a member of the 'We Need to Talk' coalition of mental health charities, said:

“We warmly welcome the investment and the commitment the Government is putting into psychological therapies. The lack of timely NHS provision of psychological therapies is a major inequality in health care. For many people with depression and anxiety, timely access to therapy can be the difference between keeping and losing a job, or staying in school and dropping out. IAPT is a unique opportunity to train and develop a group of NHS-aligned therapists with the skills that are needed to offer

support to the full range of people experiencing mental distress: from those at risk of losing their jobs to those caught up in the youth justice system.”

Notes to editors:

1. Mental health problems are the largest single cause of disability and illness in England – accounting for:

- 40% of all disability (physical and mental)
- nearly 40% of people on Incapacity Benefit (and a secondary factor for 10% more of them)
- a third of all GPs’ time

2. About 1 in 6 UK adults has a common mental health condition (i.e. depression or anxiety disorders) and an estimated 91m working days a year are lost to mental illness. The Government has set an aspiration to raise the number of working age adults in employment from 75-80% of the working age population, and has a target to reduce the number of people on Incapacity Benefit.

3. The two national IAPT demonstration sites at Newham and Doncaster have achieved:

- **Impressive recovery rates** that replicate clinical trial and are in line with NICE guidelines (50-60% on most rigorous measures);
- **Excellent recording of treatment outcomes for the first time** in mental health (90%), leading to an opportunity for a nationwide system of routine outcomes monitoring and thus to more improvements;
- **Significant achievement in helping people off statutory sick pay** and back to work/volunteering/education/training;
- **Treating large numbers of people** in a short period of time from a standing start – more than 1,000 in Newham and more than 4,000 in Doncaster;
- **Meeting previously unidentified and unmet need** by opening to self-referral – in Newham’s community people came forward who were just as ill as those referred by GPs and whose conditions were twice as chronic (four years long rather than two). They responded as well as those referred by GPs.

4. The additional funding from the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 will pay for the major training programme that provides the necessary number of suitably trained therapists and enables progressive expansion of NICE-compliant local Psychological Therapies services.

5. SHAs will need to commission their share of training places for high and low intensity trainees, based on the criteria for training provider selection. Key points to consider are:

- i. Training providers will need to demonstrate a commitment to use the national curricula (supporting documents) and learning and assessment materials, or demonstrate clear equivalence
 - ii. To meet these high standards of training in year one, it is likely that training places will need to be centred in one or two providers (to ensure adequate tutors to cover all aspects of the course, for example)
6. Each SHA has agreed to identify at least 2 PCTs to become IAPT sites, based on the site selection criteria at Annex B. Key points to consider are:
 - i. Services will need to comprise sufficient therapists (low and high intensity) to meet the needs of the whole PCT population
 - ii. At least one third of therapists will need to be fully trained, and include a director, supervisors, and a balance of low and high intensity therapists
7. Services will need to provide the region's trainees with appropriate on-the-job training.
8. A copy of the guidance is available from:
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/dh_083150