

How effective is IPT?

IPT has been proved to be effective for the treatment of depression in clinical research trials.

The UK National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) states that IPT may be considered as an alternative to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) for the treatment of moderate to severe depression in primary care.

NICE also states that IPT be considered in the psychological treatment of eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa and persistent Binge Eating Disorder, as well as an alternative to CBT in Bulimia Nervosa.

Resources

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
www.nice.org.uk

Contact us

Please contact your care coordinator for further information.

For information on Trust services visit
www.awp.nhs.uk

PALS

To make a comment, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact the Trust's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Tel: 01225 362900
Free phone: 0800 073 1778
Email: awp.pals@nhs.net

Other formats and languages

If you need this information in other formats (such as large print, Braille) or in another language, please call the PALS number.

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Avon and Wiltshire
Mental Health Partnership
NHS Trust

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)

This is one of a series of information leaflets on psychological therapies for service users. The therapy is described, what it involves, and the kinds of problem it may be helpful for.

You matter, we care

What is Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT)?

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) is one of the short term therapies for the treatment of depression.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT):

- Focusses upon one or two issues connected to past or present relationships with people that are triggering or maintaining depression.
- concentrates on four main problem areas which contribute to depression.

The therapist helps the person find out which areas are the most relevant to their depression and therapy helps them deal with these problem areas.

Four main areas of Interpersonal Psychotherapy

- **Role disputes**
These occur when the service user and significant people in their life have different expectations about their relationships.
- **Role transitions**
Depression may occur during important periods of change when a person's role alters and they struggle to cope with the change.
- **Unresolved grief**
In normal bereavement, a person is usually able to function reasonably normally within a few months.

Unresolved grief is generally grief which is delayed and experienced long after the loss or distorted grief, in which the person may not feel emotions, but instead experiences other symptoms.
- **Interpersonal sensitivity**
The person has had problems with forming and maintaining satisfactory relationships.

What does IPT involve?

IPT usually involves from 12 to 16 one hour sessions that usually occur weekly.

Sessions 1 - 3

The opening sessions are devoted to collecting information and deciding what therapy will focus on.

This phase of treatment involves reviewing an 'interpersonal inventory', which is a list of all the key relationships in the individual's life. Within the interpersonal inventory, relationships are categorised according to the four main problem areas.

Sessions 4 - 14

The service user concentrates on trying to improve the chosen problem areas with the support of the therapist.

Sessions 15 – 16

The final sessions focus upon the end of therapy, which may provoke feelings of loss associated with the end of therapy but also with previous losses. The service user may learn about how they characteristically deal with loss. Progress made is reviewed and future goals discussed.