

You can contact us at Esteem from Monday to Friday between 9am – 5pm

At other times you can obtain advice by phoning:

Esteem North
Hydepark Business Centre – 1st Floor
60 Mollinsburn Street
Glasgow
G21 4SF
Tel: 0141 630 4940

Esteem South and Clyde
Admin Building - Leverndale Hospital
510 Crookston Road
Glasgow
G53 7TU
Tel: 0141 211 6563



How to Help your Relative Cope with Psychosis



How Does Psychosis Affect People?

People who are experiencing psychosis can have difficulties in two main areas:

- Unusual experiences, such as hearing voices, or holding strong beliefs about things
- Problems with motivation, including too much or too little energy and avoiding people or activities

The first set of problems is more easily identified and can be easier to respond to. The second set can be more difficult to cope with as it can seem like the person is not bothering or has given up on things.

How Can I Help?

Helping with Unusual Experiences

Hearing voices is often very distressing for someone, as the voices are often critical and say unpleasant things. Some people may wish to talk about what the voices or saying, while others prefer to keep this private.

If the person wishes to speak about their voices, try to understand how they feel, even if you may not agree with their explanation of the voices. You can also try to point out the person's good points to boost their confidence, as the voices will often try to undermine this.

It can help to distract the person by starting conversations or getting them involved in day-to-day activities. You could also ask the person what works for them as they may have found other ways to cope with the voices.

When people have unusual ideas or beliefs, it can be difficult to understand where these come from. It is often tempting to try to talk them out of their beliefs but this can sometimes lead to heated conversations.

Try to keep calm, even if the person is saying things that seem very frightening, and reassure them by showing them you understand how significant their beliefs are to them.

Helping with Problems with Motivation

Psychosis can make it hard for a person to:

- Think straight
- Keep going
- Take an interest in people
- Keep up with things they previously enjoyed

While this can be frustrating for those trying supporting them, try not to expect the person to do too much too soon. It is important to strike the balance between gentle encouragement and making allowances for their difficulties. Offer praise for any achievement, however small, and try to find enjoyable or practical things to do together.

What Else Can Help?

Help the person to re-gain their confidence by encouraging them doing things on their own can help.

As it can be hard the person to realise that others in the family may also need support or help, give clear, calm messages about what you would like to happen.

Stick to an everyday routine with regular mealtimes and chores.

Like everyone, the person may need their own time and space on their own, so try to respect this without worrying too much.

As the person can sometimes seem distant or unemotional, show support and acceptance by continuing to spent time with them and involving them in everyday things.

Look After Yourself

It can be very difficult to support your relative and look after yourself at the same time. However, it is very important to make time for yourself to ensure that you do not become overwhelmed by what is happening to the person you care about.

This might mean taking time out for yourself and doing the things that are important to you, like seeing friends or keeping up with your interests. Keeping to the same routines in your day-to-day life can reduce tension at home.

If you wish to find more ways to cope, your relative's key-worker can suggest some things that might help. This could include speaking with them on an individual basis, attending our "Family and Friends" evenings for support from other carers, beginning family work or meeting with a clinical psychologist.