

Your questions

Contact us

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How to get more out of your appointment with your psychiatrist



Getting the most out of your appointment

It may be helpful for you to jot down any questions you have a few days before your appointment to make sure both you and your psychiatrist make the most of seeing one another.

Sometimes seeing a psychiatrist makes people nervous, but if you take this sheet with you, you will be able to refer to it to keep your chain of thought. You might want to jot down some of the answers the psychiatrist gives you along the way.

Remember the more you can tell the psychiatrist about how you feel, then the more the psychiatrist can understand you. In time you build what is called a 'therapeutic relationship' which helps everyone with your care and support.

Think about the last two weeks and how you have felt and try and describe the worst period during the two weeks.

Over the page are just some examples, but you can ask anything you like about your care and condition. Don't forget, you won't remember all the answers, nobody does, so take some paper with you to jot things down.

About the mental health issue

- What illness (diagnosis) does the psychiatrist think you have?
- How serious is the issue?
- Will you get better and how long might it take?
- Will you fully recover or will your problems always be with you even if you get slightly better?
- Tell the psychiatrist all the medication you are on. If you can't remember, take the boxes with you. This is very important
- What are the possible side-effects of the medication you are on?
- Tell the psychiatrist if you think you are experiencing side-effects
- Are there alternative medications you could be put on that would be more helpful?
- Where can you get more information about your problem and the medications you are on? For more information please visit: www.choiceandmedication.org/derbyshcft
- Are there other agencies that the psychiatrist can refer you to for help with your problems?
- What is the likely course of your illness? What is the long-term outlook with or without treatment?

“ Your psychiatrist is here to help you and can only know what you tell them. You and they are a team working together. ”

- What are your treatment options and how effective is each option?
- Ask the psychiatrist when you last had a Care Programme Approach (CPA) review (they will know what you mean)
- Ask for a copy of your last CPA review say: “If my symptoms worsen, what should I do? When and who should I contact?” Ask who you should contact if you feel in crisis outside their normal working hours?

General concerns

- Will you have regular physical health examinations and who will do them?
- Where can you get information about your Benefits?
- Where can you go to meet people like yourself who have first-hand experience of your condition and shown signs of some recovery?
- Can you be referred to a day centre so you can engage in some therapeutic activity?
- How do you go about improving your physical condition, e.g. yoga, swimming, gym, which will help you with your mental health problems?
- How might you get into training, education or meaningful activity if your condition improves?