

# Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

A large, solid teal-colored wave graphic that starts from the left edge and curves upwards and then downwards towards the right, creating a decorative background element.

**Supporting “No health  
without mental health”**

November 2012

**A government funded national project  
to improve mental health and well being**

## What is IAPT?

Originally launched in 2008, the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) programme is a large-scale initiative that aims to significantly increase the availability of NICE-recommended psychological treatments for depression and anxiety disorders, within NHS-commissioned services in England.

IAPT is currently helping to deliver the government mental health strategy, *"No health without mental health"*, by supporting Clinical Commissioning Groups and Health & Well Being Boards in completing the roll out of the adult programme, as well as extending benefits to children and young people, older people, those with a severe mental illness, personality disorders, long term physical health conditions.

*"The support and advice I was given during my step-by-step sessions have given me the strength, motivation and self-belief to work through my mental health issues head-on. I was provided with a safe environment, free from judgement or pressure, where I felt listened to and understood. Step-by-step played an important role in my journey back to good health and happiness, enabling me to lead a fulfilling and enjoyable life."*

**Emma, IAPT service user**

*“The range of problems clients have presented with has been surprisingly broad, and has given me excellent development opportunities as well as developing my confidence as a clinician. Teaching people CBT based skills has meant that they have been able to take control of their own problems and are more able to manage them in future.”*

**Ashley Snowdon, PWP, Teeside IAPT**

## **No health without mental health**

At least one in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives. This places a significant burden on the individual's wellbeing and their family, as well as the NHS and the wider economy.

To combat this, in 2011, the government launched its mental health strategy, *“No health without mental health”*<sup>1</sup>, which aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the population, by making high-quality services equally accessible to all. This cross-government outcomes strategy committed more than £400 million over four years (up to 2014/15), to further improve equitable access to talking therapies.

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1 HM Government and DH, No health without Mental Health, February 2011

## IAPT's successes

Key successes of the programme in the first three full financial years to March 2012 include:

- Over 1 million people entering treatment
- 680,000 people completing treatment
- Recovery rates consistently in excess of 45% and 65% significantly improved
- Over 45,000 people moving off sick pay and benefits
- Nearly 4,000 new practitioners trained
- A major transformation of Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services initiated.

*"Before using the service I was in a very dark place and felt lost. My therapist helped me look and think at things in a different way, which helped me with my day-to-day life. After my sessions, I came away feeling reassured and stronger to carry on with my recovery. I don't know what I would have done without this help. Thank you for the invaluable service."*

**Bob, IAPT service user**

## Plans for a healthier future

By March 2015, access to high quality evidence-based psychological therapies, capable of delivering recovery rates of 50% or more, is expected to be available for at least 15% of the adult population. The scope of IAPT is also expected to have been extended to other groups in need. In order to achieve this goal we will be:

- Continuing to monitor patient satisfaction, safety and clinical effectiveness, using greatly enhanced data and information systems
- Training a further 2,000 practitioners to meet service demands
- Evaluating which models deliver evidence-based services in the best way to support sustainable investment
- Expanding services to address local needs on an equitable basis
- Extending the scope of the programme to specific groups at risk, including:
  - Children & Young People;
  - People with a severe mental illness or personality disorder;
  - People with a long term physical health conditions and / or medically unexplained symptoms.



*"The IAPT service in Sussex, Time to Talk has been a great success. Patients have spoken very positively about the service they have received. In nearly 30 years of practice it has been one of the best new developments for treatment of patients with anxiety and depression."*

**Dr Sara Kelly,**  
GP, Lavant Road Surgery, Chichester

**Further information about the programme is available on the IAPT website at**

**<http://www.iapt.nhs.uk>**

**Information and contact details for local services across the country can be accessed in the Therapy and Counselling services directory on the NHS Choices website at**

**<http://www.nhs.uk>**