**Problems we help with**

Everyone has experienced feeling sad, worried or scared and often these feelings pass on their own. Sometimes we might feel stuck and our day-to-day lives start to become affected by our negative thoughts and feelings.

Let’s Talk IAPT provides psychological therapy for common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. Below gives an idea of the kind of difficulties that you may be experiencing and the kind of therapeutic support we offer for each (though this may vary slightly between services). This list is not exhaustive, and not everyone’s difficulties fit neatly into one type. Your first appointment with the service is an assessment to explore your current difficulties and what you want to change, to ensure we are the right service to help you.

There are some problems that we are unable to help with*(hyperlink to hidden page #20)* or there may be other reasons why a more specialist service would be more appropriate. If this is the case, we will always help you to think about where else you can get support and how you can access this.

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**Low mood and depression**

Low mood and Depression are commonly experienced as feeling sad and hopeless. It can lead to withdrawing from others and you might stop doing things you previously enjoyed. There might be a lack of energy or motivation. Some people may experience suicidal thoughts or thoughts of hurting themselves in some way.

Periods of feeling low or depressed can last weeks or months. Some people can have recurring episodes of depression over several years.

**Common symptoms**

* Thoughts of being not good enough or feeling you have let yourself or others down
* Feeling sad, low, irritable, tearful or hopeless
* Not taking pleasure in things you used to enjoy
* Changes in appetite, problems sleeping, more aches and pains than usual or headaches.
* Feeling tired and lacking energy and motivation

All of these difficulties can have significant impacts across all areas of your life; in relationships with friends and family, and in work or study.

**Treatments we offer**

We offer a range of treatments to help low mood and depression. At your first appointment, we will discuss if the service is right for you and if so, which treatments would be most helpful for you. Click on the links below to find more about each (each being a Hyperlink to relevant item on ‘What we offer’ pages).

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
* Counselling for Depression
* Behavioural couples work
* Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)
* Dynamic Interpersonal Therapy (DIT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/clinical-depression](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/clinical-depression)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Panic Attacks**

Panic Disorder is an anxiety disorder where people experience sudden and intense feelings of panic and fear, known as panic attacks. Panic attacks typically last between 5 and 20 minutes. They may happen in certain situations or out of the blue, for no apparent reason. Panic attacks can be so frightening and overwhelming that you do whatever you can, sometimes avoiding certain situations, to try and stop having them.

**Common symptoms**

Feeling anxious or panicky can cause distressing and unpleasant feelings both emotionally and physically. Some of the physical symptoms can include

* Dizziness and changes in breathing such as breathlessness or hyperventilation
* Chest pain and palpitations or heart pounding
* Feeling hot or cold
* Sweating
* Nausea or an upset stomach and feeling like you need to go to the toilet.
* Wobbly legs and feeling faint
* Dry mouth
* Visual disturbance

These physical symptoms are often associated with feelings of intense fear. Especially if we misinterpret what is going on in our body as a sign there is a serious health problem. Although very intense and unpleasant the symptoms of panic attacks will not cause you any physical harm.

**Treatments we offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/panic-disorder/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/panic-disorder/)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Worry or generalised anxiety disorder (GAD)**

Everyone worries. Sometimes it can be helpful when it prompts us to do something, for example studying for an exam or preparing for a presentation at work. However, for some people worrying can feel excessive or it can be about everything and anything. When this happens, it can stop you getting on with your life.

**Common symptoms**

A high level of worry can lead to you spending a lot of time planning or imagining feared outcomes. Uncertain situations can be particularly difficult and might be avoided. Sometimes it means you don’t feel able to ask others to do things and take on too much yourself. This can impact on work and day to day life and sometimes result in feeling low due to being unable to do the things that are important to you.

* Feeling restless
* Problems with concertation
* Imagining bad things happening or seeing situations as threatening even when they aren’t
* Being unable to stop or control worrying
* Feeling physically tense
* Difficulties sleeping; either problems getting to and staying asleep or feeling restless as night
* Feeling irritable and tired

**Treatments we offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/generalised-anxiety-disorder)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Phobias**

A phobia is an intense fear of a situation, object or animal. When you have a phobia, you will often go to great lengths to avoid what you fear and when it is unavoidable it results in feelings of anxiety and panic. This avoidance can lead to problems when it impacts your life; whether that’s stopping you going on a plane, going to the dentist because you fear needles or causing you a level of anxiety you find distressing.

**Common symptoms**

Sometimes a picture of what you fear or even just the thought of it can be enough to bring on these feelings.

* Anxiety or terror
* Rapid heartbeat or pains in the chest
* Sweating and trembling
* Changes in breathing; breathing rapidly
* Headaches and dizziness
* Stomach churning or ‘butterflies’
* Feeling hot or cold
* Fear of losing control or fainting
* Feeling of dread
* Some people experience panic attacks (Hyper link to Panic Disorder page)

**Treatments we offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/phobias](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/phobias)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Health Anxiety**

Being anxious about our health from time to time is very common and can be helpful if it leads to us taking steps towards a healthier lifestyle for example exercising or quitting smoking. Health Anxiety involves the fear that you either have or will develop a serious physical illness. This fear continues even when medical problems seem to have been ruled out or when a doctor has told you there is nothing to worry about. You may seek reassurance from medical professionals, friends and family.

**Common symptoms**

Health Anxiety symptoms can include

* Repeatedly checking your body for changes
* Avoiding things that remind you of illness such as medical TV programmes
* Or the opposite and spend a lot of time researching symptoms and illnesses
* Feeling anxious, worried or panicky
* Spending a lot of time thinking about illness and symptoms and imaging scenarios if you were to get ill
* Acting as if you were ill, “just in case”, for example avoiding exertion or exercise, resting, or staying close to home.
* You may also notice the physical symptoms of anxiety problems; rapid heartbeat, changes in breathing, feeling hot or cold, butterflied or nausea

**Treatments we offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/health-anxiety](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/health-anxiety)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Social Anxiety Disorder**

It’s not uncommon to feel anxious when speaking in front of a large group of people or giving a presentation. For someone struggling with Social Anxiety Disorder that anxiety can feel excessive and can also be felt when it is a small group or talking one on one with someone. Having Social Anxiety is more than being shy, it is an overwhelming fear of social situations. It is hard to avoid social interactions all together (as we often would when we have a phobia of something). Social Anxiety can be very distressing and have a massive impact on your life.

**Common symptoms**

Because you can’t avoid social situations all together often a lot of strategies (not always deliberate) are developed to help you cope or mask your anxiety. During the social interaction you might struggle to focus on the conversation itself due to being so aware of your own thoughts and anxiety symptoms. Other symptoms might include

* Worrying about everyday activities, social events, meetings, phone calls
* When talking to people you might make an effort to get you words out right or be thinking ahead to what you can say
* Fear that people can see how nervous you are, perhaps by blushing or stumbling on your words, and because of that will think badly of you or judge you as incompetent.
* Avoid situations where you might be judged or potentially criticised
* Physical symptoms of anxiety including palpitations, sweating, changes in your breathing.
* You might start developing strategies in conversations like avoiding eye contact, monitoring the other person or peoples for signs how you are coming across
* Ruminating on social interactions and deeming yourself to have performed badly.

**What help we can offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

<https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/social-anxiety/>

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder generally characterised by having obsessions and compulsions. The obsessive thoughts (unwanted and unpleasant thoughts, images or urges) are ego-dystonic; meaning they don’t fit with how you see yourself and cause feelings of anxiety, disgust or unease. The compulsion is a repetitive behaviour or mental act that you do to relieve the unpleasant feelings brought about by the obsessive thought.

These obsessions can be very distressing and the compulsions can significantly interfere with your life.

**Common symptoms**

* Frequent unwanted thoughts, images or urges that you find distressing
* Repetitive behaviours such as washing your hands, cleaning, checking or counting
* Repetitive mental acts such as repeating words silently or praying
* Compulsive behaviours can take up a lot of your time and make certain things difficult such as someone who needs to repeatedly check things before leaving their house.

It’s not uncommon for parents to develop OCD during the pregnancy or after the birth of their child. This can be around worrying about harm coming to their baby. Like OCD in the general population this too responds well to CBT based treatments.

**What help we can offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd)

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Having a baby and parenthood**

Having a baby is a unique time for all parents. Although this time can be joyful, exciting and rewarding, it is common for expectant and new parents to experience emotional challenges or difficulties which may result in increased vulnerability of developing depression and/or anxiety.

**Common experiences**

Some common experiences expectant and new parents can include

* low mood and sadness
* feeling indifferent towards their baby
* worry and tension
* difficulties sleeping even when their baby is sleeping
* unable to enjoy anything
* feeling unable to cope
* feelings of worthlessness and thoughts of not doing a good enough job as a parent
* worrying thoughts about their baby
* anxiety about labour or struggling to come to terms with a difficult labour
* challenges or difficulties in relationships with their partner as a result of adjusting to being a family.

**Treatments we offer**

IAPT recognises that these challenges, during the perinatal or postnatal period, can be distressing and worrying for the parent, and IAPT offers non-judgemental emotional support. Psychological intervention during both the perinatal and postnatal period can be beneficial to the new parent and can help you to adjust to your new role in parenthood and its’ associated demands. Treatments can include:

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
* Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)
* Couples work

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/mental-health-problems-pregnant/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/mental-health-problems-pregnant/)

<http://psychology.exeter.ac.uk/pmh/mothers/>

**Low self-esteem**

Self-esteem is our own measure of our worth and how we value ourselves. When low self-esteem develops as a long-term problem it can start to impact our lives. We often learn to see ourselves in a negative light as a result of experiences we have growing up. Having a deep held belief of being not good enough or unlovable can hold us back in relationships, in study and work.

**Common symptoms**

Low self-esteem can develop into problems with anxiety and depression. You might notice

* Lots of worry and negative predictions about the future
* Frequent negative self-critical thoughts
* Avoidance of situations of challenges that might expose what you believe you really are; be that not expressing an opinion or not going for a promotion at work
* Putting others needs before our own or feeling unable to say no
* Feeling low as a result of what you don’t do or say
* Overcompensating and do the best that you can at a cost to yourself

**Treatments we offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT
* Groups and workshops
* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
* Counselling

**Further information**

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/raising-low-self-esteem/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/raising-low-self-esteem/)

**Trauma (PTSD)**

PTSD stands for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and is a problem that can develop after a traumatic incident; a normal response to an abnormal situation. The kinds of events people may find traumatic can include road accidents, personal assaults such as sexual assault, mugging or robbery, serious health problems or childbirth.

Often our brain is able to ‘file away’ the traumatic memory, and whilst not pleasant to think about we are able to know and feel like it happened in the past. This typically happens over a few weeks after the incident as we process it. PTSD can develop soon after or sometimes it is weeks, months or even years later.

**Common symptoms**

When struggling to process a traumatic event you might notice

* Unwanted memories or flashbacks of the incident
* With these memories or flashbacks there is a feeling of being back in the incident, like you are re-experiencing the trauma
* Nightmares of the event
* Feeling easily startled and on edge a lot of the time
* Feeling numb or detached from reality
* Avoiding places or things that remind you of the event

You may also develop depression as a result of this, stop doing things you used to enjoy, feel hopeless or have a sense of dread about the future and struggle with concertation and sleeping

**What help we can offer**

* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
* EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)

**Further information**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/>

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

**Sleep problems and insomnia**

Insomnia is an ongoing difficulty getting to sleep or difficulty with staying asleep, which can lead to rarely feeling refreshed when you have to get up in the morning.

Problems with sleep can be secondary to other problems including physical health problems or difficulties like depression, excessive worry or trauma. Sometimes they exist in the absence of these and unhelpful patterns of behaviour start developing which makes a regular and refreshing sleep pattern even more elusive.

**Common symptoms**

* Difficulty in falling asleep
* wake up during the night and struggle to get back to sleep
* wake up early in the morning
* feel irritable and tired all the time
* find it difficult to function during the day
* Struggling to nap in the day even if you feel really tired.

Sometimes your sleep problem could be sleeping too much but still not being refreshed.

**What help we can offer**

* Guided Self-help
* Computerised CBT

**Further information**

[**https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/insomnia/**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/insomnia/)

[**https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/**](https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/)