



MI Fact Sheet Series

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGING MENTAL ILLNESS

The biopsychosocial model in action

	Acute illness (crisis and stabilisation)	Recovery process begun (growing awareness)	Recovery well established (recovery and hope)
Biological support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedating medication • Appropriate psychotropic medication (larger doses) • Antidepressant medication and/or ECT • Nutrition and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychotropic medication • Appropriate antidepressant and/or ECT • Mood stabiliser • Ongoing review and adjustment of treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychotropic medication • Appropriate antidepressant and/or ECT • Mood stabiliser • Ongoing review on a less frequent basis and adjustment to treatment
Psychological support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce stimulation • Provide safety • Sit beside rather than face on • Do not challenge delusions and hallucinations as being false – acknowledge their emotional impact (eg fear) • Assist with medication • Referral of family to appropriate supports • Information about mental illness and service system • Emotional support • Practical strategies of self care and care of their loved one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased stimulation • Increasing levels of self responsibility • Provide information about the illness • Possibly begin supportive counselling • Case management • Development of wellness recovery plan and implementation • Referral of family to appropriate supports • Link into support networks • Strategy development to support recovery • Debrief experience for themselves • Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling and support the person with the illness to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – debrief the experience – reflect on how this experience can inform wellness recovery plan • Provide information about the illness • Maintain and improve connection points (important relationships) • Application of wellness recovery plan in daily life • Reduce or cease case management • Referral of family to appropriate supports • Support networks • Keeping in contact with new information • Advocacy activities
Social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitalisation or clinical intensive support at home • Support and information for family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management • Engagement with psychosocial rehabilitation services –Home Based Outreach, Psychosocial Day programs, Respite Programs • Enhance relationships with family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased independence • Psychosocial rehabilitation services maybe decreasing with increased links to meaningful employment/volunteerism/study/leisure

Useful references

Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia
www.mifellowshipaustralia.org.au

Mental Illness Fellowship Victoria
www.mifellowship.org

Mental Health Services Website (Vic)
www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth

National Alliance of the Mentally Ill (NAMI) (USA)
www.nami.org

Mental Health Council of Australia
www.mhca.com.au

SANE Australia
www.sane.org

Beyond Blue
www.beyondblue.org.au

Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia fact sheets

Understanding psychosis

Beautiful minds can be reclaimed

Family and carer supports and services

What can friends and family do to help a person experiencing mental illness?



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