

Carers' Awareness Tools & Support (CATS)

What is the CATS (Carers' Awareness Tools & Support)?

The aim of the group programme is to **increase knowledge of Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder/ Borderline Personality Disorder** and **improve communication** between family members and the cared for person.

We **work with carers** as part of the triangle of care (which is a therapeutic alliance between the service user, our staff and the carer) **to promote safety, support recovery and sustain wellbeing.**

How can family skills interventions help?

It is not uncommon for family, friends, and carers to sometimes feel helpless during a crisis or when their loved one is in distress or struggling.

Our group course is designed to:

- help you understand what's going on and how your loved one is feeling
- provide you with techniques to help you offer support to the person you care for
- help you to support your own well-being.



You may also benefit from hearing and sharing experiences of others in similar situations.

To be eligible to apply, the person you support **must be over 18 years and live in Berkshire.**

How is the course delivered?

The course consists of eight **two hour online teaching sessions** which take place every other week. The final ninth session is held six weeks after the end of the teaching sessions.

You will be **required to attend all nine sessions.** If you miss two sessions you may be asked to withdraw from the course.

Sessions will be delivered by carers with lived experience and mental health practitioners.



Course outline:

BPD/EUPD diagnosis

- This session aims to increase understanding of personality disorder

Validation & Invalidation

- These skills help to reduce one's own dysregulation (self validation) and improve relationships (validating others)

Managing emotions

- Family members are taught new ways to think about and understand emotions and new strategies for managing them.

Reflections

- Sessions five and nine provide you with an opportunity to reflect, discuss and ask any outstanding questions about what you've learnt throughout the programme.

N.B. The final session will take place six weeks after the teaching sessions end. The final follow up session will provide you with an opportunity for further support and for us to assess whether the programme has made a difference to you and the person you care for.

Helping your loved one/yourself

- This session explores helping your loved one & helping yourself

Improving Relationships

- These skills help reduce chaos and conflict and improve relationships.

Managing painful situations

- This session is about accepting reality as it is and moving forward.

Useful websites:

www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/other-services/carers-information/

www.mind.org.uk/information-support

www.rethink.org

www.borderlinepersonalitydisorder.com

www.lifesigns.org.uk

How do I apply for a place on the course?

Scan the QR Code to complete our electronic application form or email IMPACTT.Team@berkshire.nhs.uk for a paper application form.

What happens next?

We'll contact you for a 1:1 discussion to assess whether this course will benefit you. We will agree a start date for you to join the course. You will be expected to attend all 9 sessions and will be asked to complete pre and post questionnaires.



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