

Report: 5 day Foundational Training in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Kent CHYPS, provided by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

We would like to express our gratitude for the funding provided to complete the above training. This has enabled us to sustain and further develop the DBT service.

The training was attended by three clinicians: 1 art therapist, 1 psychologist and 1 nurse.

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is a treatment which has been shown to improve mental health outcomes and reduce hospital admissions. It is recommended by NICE (guideline 78) for people with Borderline Personality Disorder when reduction of self harm is a priority. It has been adapted for use with adolescents who present with chronic risk taking behaviour and mental health problems (Miller A.). DBT has been used with adolescents in UK NHS healthcare settings with promising results (James et al). DBT is a multimodal treatment: people in treatment have individual therapy sessions, group skills training and telephone skills coaching in moments of crisis. Therapists have to be part of a “consult team” providing supervision.

The purpose of the training was to extend the availability of DBT to other localities and replace clinicians who had left the clinic.

The three clinicians attended a 5 day residential programme (Foundational Course) in September 2013 in Bromsgrove. They all successfully completed the required homework set on the course by March 2014. Part of this was completed in the consultation (supervision) team which has been beneficial for the existing team members. It has enabled the team to find out about new developments in DBT and discussions have been useful in improving the adherence to the treatment modality. Training three additional clinicians has enabled us to offer this treatment modality in Ashford, Dover, Folkestone and Canterbury to those most in need of it.

Feedback clinician 1

Attending the Foundational Training in Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) has enabled me to offer this recommended treatment to young people struggling with Emerging Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and in doing so supported the service to offer more choice to the patients in my locality. DBT offers an approach that enables the patient to integrate the skills they learn into their life as an individual rather than a product of their diagnosis. Additionally it validates the patient's experience whilst enabling a way forward. The training and subsequent supervision has supported, developed and informed my practice, offering safety and structure when working with young people struggling with complex, risky and challenging mental health difficulties.

Feedback clinician 2

The training experience was very comprehensive - perhaps a bit too oriented towards using DBT with the adult population as we are an adolescent DBT service. It has enabled me to join the existing Consult Team and start using the new skills immediately with individuals and in a group setting. I would like to find out more about how to use DBT with Eating Disorders; Depression and specific features of working with adolescents and DBT in future training.

Feedback clinician 3

The third clinician is currently on special leave. She has been an integral part of the tier 3 DBT team and has also used the modality in working with young people seen within a youth offending context. Upon her return she will continue to be part of the core DBT team and working with the Youth Offending Team.

As a DBT service we continuously strive to improve the service we deliver. Recent developments have included the use of modern technology and improvements to the way we teach mindfulness, which underpins the treatment. We have changed the way we obtain feedback from service users. We are in the process of amending the group skills training so that it can be useful as a stand alone modality for young people who do not require full DBT.

Dr A Malmendier-Muehlschlegel on behalf of the
East Kent CHYPS DBT Team

Miller A.L., Rathus J.H. , Linehan M.M., (2007), Dialectical behaviour therapy with suicidal adolescents, published by The Guildford Press, New York

James A.C., Taylor A., Winmill L., Alfoadari K. (2008). A preliminary community study of dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) with adolescent females demonstrating persistent deliberate self-harm (DSH). Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 13, 148-152