

Mental Health Day Treatment Program

Program Guide

Mental Health Day Treatment Program

Program Guide

If you are considering or are about to start the Day Treatment Program, you probably have a lot of questions. This handbook will give you some answers to those questions.

This handbook will help you feel more comfortable in knowing what is expected of you, and what you can expect from the program and the staff.

If you have any questions after reading this handbook, ask a staff member of the Day Treatment Program.

Your first day

Most people are very nervous their first day. If you are feeling something like, “this may help some people, but not me” or “I can’t talk in front of other people” or “I can’t handle this”, you are not alone. Many people during their first day in the program express these same thoughts and feelings.

Good advice others have given is “give yourself a chance”, and “sit back and observe”. Try to talk to the other participants.

– Written by graduating group member

What is the Mental Health Day Treatment Program?

The Mental Health Day Treatment Program offers a 6-week intensive group experience. Your psychiatrist has referred you to help you gain knowledge and skills to:

- Improve your self-awareness.
- Develop your strengths.
- Improve your communication.
- Organize your daily life.
- Set realistic goals.
- Cope with mental health problems.
- Prevent future mental health problems.

To help you decide what changes you want to make, ask yourself the following questions:

- How are my relationships?
- Do I enjoy my leisure (free time) activities?
- Am I satisfied with my work?
- Do I feel productive?
- Do I have enough structure in my day?
- Am I able to say what I want or need from others?
- Am I able to say no without feeling guilty?
- Can I express how I feel?
- How do I deal with stress in my life?
- How do I deal with feelings of guilt, shame, and low self-worth?

Your answers to the above questions will help you to set your Program goals.

Medication

This is an intensive psychotherapy program. As such, medication is not our main focus.

If you need medication for your mental health, it will be managed by a psychiatrist while you are in the Program. If you are not on a drug plan, the medication will be free of charge while you are attending the Day Treatment Program.

Your medication may be picked up from the pharmacy in the Halifax Infirmary. If you have a drug plan, you can continue to get your medication from your local pharmacy. Our Program focuses on mental health while staying aware of physical issues. If you have a medical/physical problem, we will refer you to an appropriate doctor (usually your family doctor). Our pharmacy only supplies medication used for mental health reasons.

We, as a team, work with your family doctor. A full report about your stay in the Program will be sent to your family doctor at the end of the Program. We expect you to inform us if your family doctor has made any medication/treatment changes while you are in the Program.

If any changes are made to your mental health medication by the team, you will be told right away by either the psychiatrist or your case coordinator. If your medications are to be reduced, this needs to be done slowly. **Do not stop your medication suddenly.** If you are having any difficulties understanding what your medication is for, or when and how to take it, please ask your case coordinator.

Medications have a variety of side effects. For example, you may notice changes in sexual functioning, changes in sleep, or stomach upset. Please tell your case coordinator about any side effects like these.

Treatment principles

Here and now focus:

Real change can only happen in the present. Therefore, the focus of treatment is on increasing your present awareness, coping strategies, and attitudes.

Family/community focus:

We see you as part of your community, work, and family. Your treatment goals will be made keeping this in mind.

Relapse prevention:

The aim of the program is to help you to improve how you function in your community, and prevent or cut down on future mental difficulties.

Group focus:

Most of the treatment happens in a group setting.

Confidentiality:

Group matters should not be discussed outside of the group sessions. Talking about any personal information, even without names, can be harmful. Staff members will respect your right to confidentiality within the Program. There are circumstances in which hospitals, doctors, or therapists are required by law to release certain information. If you would like more information about this, we can refer you to the department in the hospital that deals with this issue.

Team approach:

All staff will be involved in your treatment. Weekly team meetings keep staff up to date on your goals and progress.

Responsibility:

You are responsible for setting your goals. You are also responsible for working on these goals within the Program and at home.

Mental health awareness:

You will learn about your mental health problem. If you are taking medication, it will be managed in the Program.

Holistic (whole person) approach:

Treatment focuses on all aspects of mental health including physical, emotional, and intellectual.

Dignity and respect:

You and the staff are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect.

Research:

In order to make sure that we are helping our patients, we have an active research program. We carry out a variety of studies. You may be asked to take part. This is optional. In these projects, you may be asked to complete a series of questionnaires before and after the program, or take part in a more in-depth interview. One of our research staff will talk about the details of any study you are invited to take part in.

What can I expect from staff?

Your staff members:

- The staff will be present and on time for all groups for which they are responsible.
- Each staff member will respect your right to confidentiality within the Program.
- All staff, as leaders of the various groups, will contribute to giving you feedback.
- All case coordinators will be available to hear your feedback on the way the Program works.

Your case coordinator:

You are assigned a case coordinator when you are referred to the Program. Your case coordinator might be a social worker, psychiatric resident, nurse, or occupational therapist.

The case coordinator:

- Helps you decide what goals or problems you want to work on while at the Day Treatment Program.
- Sees you one on one as needed.
- May see you with a friend or family.
- Reviews your week-to-week progress and any difficulties you are having.
- Refers you to a specialist if needed.
- Plans follow-up treatment with you.

There are important differences between therapy and friendship. In order to offer participants the best care, the therapist's judgement needs to stay objective and professional. Your therapist cannot also be your friend, although he or she will be caring and friendly. If your therapist were to interact with you in any other way, such as employing you or giving legal or financial advice, they might have a conflict of interest with you and you might not be as successful in therapy.

Your assessment interview

You will be thoroughly assessed by your case coordinator. Some questions which will be asked in the assessment are:

- Is this the right time for you to attend a program like this?
- Would this program meet your needs?
- What are your goals for the program?
- Are your living arrangements stable?
- Would you like to spend a few days as a visitor to the program to help you decide if the program is right for you?
- Do you have your drug and/or alcohol problems under control?
- Do you have supportive people in your life?

What is expected of me?

- The most important thing we expect of you in the Day Treatment Program is that you are in charge of getting better. You decide what problems you have and what changes you need to make. The staff are here to help you but, in the end, it is up to you to work on making these changes.
- You are expected to arrive at the Day Treatment Program on time every day. If you are going to be late or absent, you are expected to call 902-473-2500 and let your case coordinator know.
- You are expected to attend all groups and be on time for all groups and appointments. If you arrive late, it is expected that you will not join the group until the next session.
- The support you get from relationships with other group members is important in your therapy. You are at a vulnerable time in your life and sometimes these relationships can get too close. It is important to be aware of this and have good boundaries so that you can keep the focus on your Program goals.
- As part of having good boundaries and protecting confidentiality, use of social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is discouraged.
- Each week, you are expected to set goals which relate to the changes you wanted to make when you first started the Day Treatment Program.
- You are expected to let your case coordinator know of any changes that are happening in your life, as well as any relapses of drug or alcohol use.
- It is your responsibility to take your medications as prescribed. You are also responsible for letting your case coordinator know about any concerns or changes in medications.
- You may be expected to choose a family member or friend to come to the Day Treatment Program for a meeting with you and your case coordinator.

Groups

The team believes in care for the mind, the body, and the spirit. Groups reflect this whole person focus.

All participants need to take part in all groups. The groups link together, so missing some groups will affect the overall benefit you may gain from the program.

Group guidelines

These guidelines were developed by participants and apply to all groups.

We will respect each other by:

- Being on time
- Staying in the group
- Being responsible for what we say and using “I” statements
- Keeping everything said in the group confidential
- Not talking about others when they are not present
- Being non-judgmental
- Being honest
- Allowing only one conversation at a time
- Listening carefully and respectfully
- Turning off cell phones
- Not using electronic devices
- Not physically comforting others during group. This allows them the opportunity to learn to settle and soothe themselves
- Not using profanity (swear words), to make sure the group feels safe

Relaxation

Anxiety is very troubling. In this group, you will learn to cut down on your anxiety. You will learn 6 different relaxation techniques. Learning how to relax is one of the most important skills taught in this Program. Learning other skills, such as how to deal with your emotions or to be more assertive, will only happen if you can first learn how to settle your body and mind. Relaxation techniques may not feel natural at first, but with practice, they are skills you can use throughout the day to give you a sense of calmness and peace.

Community Meeting

‘Community Meeting’ is a meeting in which volunteer positions are chosen for the week. During your 6 weeks at the Day Treatment Program, you are considered a member of our community. With that role comes shared responsibilities. The volunteer positions make sure the Program works well from day to day.

Feelings Group

‘Feelings Group’ is a group in which all staff and participants meet together. It is a time to share your emotional experiences with others and to understand how they relate to your life. It is also the group in which participants who are finishing the Program say their goodbyes and review their experiences. Participants are usually asked not to write or take notes during this group.

Goals Group

During this group, you are asked to set small goals for the week. Goals should be in keeping with your overall treatment goals. Overall treatment goals will have been set by you and your case coordinator.

The goals set should be **SMART**:

- › **Specific**
- › **Measurable**
- › **Action-oriented**
- › **Realistic**
- › **Time-limited**

Goals are therapy-related challenges that you have had trouble doing before you came to day treatment. They are not simply the everyday chores we all have to deal with. The focus of this group is on behaviours. Goals Group is based on the principles of Behavioural Activation Therapy and uses the SMART technique to change negative behaviours. Eventually, thoughts and feelings will change as a result.

Goals from the previous week or weekend are also reviewed to find which have or have not been reached.

Physical Activity Group

There is a connection between your physical and mental health. Exercise decreases anxiety and raises your mood.

This group offers you an opportunity to get moving at a level that is possible for you. The Physical Activity Group samples different exercises, group games and adapted sport using simple and easy routines and equipment. The importance of physical activity, motivation to get started, and available community resources will also be explored. This group will help you experience the benefits of exercise and find enjoyment in making it part of your life.

Stress, Emotions, and Your Health

Stress is a normal part of daily life. Stress causes emotional upset. Learning to deal with stress is a necessary skill for maintaining your mental health. This group will help you manage stress better. Sessions will be spent looking at:

- › Symptoms of stress
- › Positive and negative coping methods
- › Techniques to manage stress
- › Anger styles and management

Relationships with Yourself and Others

The purpose of this group is to strengthen your relationship with yourself and others. This is a skill-building group. The 6 sessions will include topics such as:

- › Self-esteem
- › Shame
- › Boundaries
- › Relationships
- › Attachment styles
- › Love languages

Assertiveness Training

During the course of our daily lives, we need to interact with others. Learning to express our needs directly, while respecting the position of others, is a vital tool to keep us feeling well and secure. This group helps you develop communication skills, including:

- › Expression of feelings
- › Learning to cope with people who make unreasonable demands
- › Basic conversation skills
- › Expressing needs

You will develop greater self-confidence and a sense of control.

The group is organized with a review of homework from the previous week. The skill will be determined each week by you, followed by role play and feedback.

Leisure Group

Leisure and recreation can support your well-being in many ways. Leisure activities can give you the opportunity to socialize, increase your confidence and self esteem, relax, and be physically active or express yourself creatively.

Doing the things that you enjoy may also help with motivation when you face challenges. Mental health challenges can start a pattern of withdrawal and avoidance, so this group offers a chance to explore your interests and practice making leisure a part of your routine.

Community Day

Wednesdays - all day

The purpose of the Day Treatment Program is to help you to function at your best and be successful in your community.

Community Day happens every Wednesday. This is a chance for you to practice the skills you are learning and to work on your goals outside the Program.

Community Day is used for many things:

- › Doing your errands
- › Volunteer work
- › Job searching
- › Other appointments
- › Homework

Noon hour meal

Lunch is provided for anyone attending the Day Treatment Program. A meal ticket is given out each day and can be used in the cafeteria. What you eat is your choice. If the amount of food you choose is more than the amount on the meal ticket, you are responsible for paying the difference.

Parking

While you are in the Program, underground parking in the Veterans' Memorial Building is free of charge. The entrance is off Jubilee Road (Veterans' Memorial Lane). This is the only parking lot whose cost is covered by our Program. You will need to have your parking ticket stamped by the Program secretary. (If you do not have your ticket stamped, you will have to pay cash and we can't reimburse you.)

Videotaping

As part of your treatment you will have the option to have your assessment interview(s) videotaped. The taping will help you and your therapist accurately track your progress. Seeing how you progress will often make the therapy more meaningful and rewarding. You can choose to view the videotape or not. No one else will view the tape without your permission. It will be erased after your discharge.

From time to time, groups may be videotaped **with the participants' knowledge and consent**. Group sessions will not be watched from behind the mirror without the participants' knowledge and consent.

**NSHA promotes a smoke-free and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!**

Website

We have a website that you are invited to visit.

Go to: www.nshealth.ca

- Click on 'Programs and Services'
- Click on 'Halifax area (not including IWK Health Centre) and West Hants'
- Click on 'M'
- Click on 'Mental Health Day Treatment'

The site includes an overview of our program and the descriptions of our groups. It also has general information about the role and responsibilities of both patients and clinicians.

We also have links to our theory of wellness as well as our approach to illness. We add presentations that we have done that might be of interest, as well as articles and other information that might be of use to both the public and health care professionals.

You will also find links to other community and professional organizations.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

Nova Scotia Health Authority

www.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Mental Health Day Treatment Staff, QEII Health Sciences Centre®

Designed by: NSHA Library Services

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.
The information is not intended to be and does not constitute healthcare or medical advice.
If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

WM85-0662 Updated January 2017

The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.