

# The Endeavour Programme



Creating a life worth living

## Client Information Leaflet

HSE South - North Lee  
Adult Mental Health Service  
Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Programme

July 2012

## ***What is The Endeavour Programme?***

The Endeavour Programme is the North Lee Adult Mental Health Service treatment for persons with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. The programme is based on an evidence based treatment called Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). This was originally developed by clinical psychologist Dr. Marsha Linehan<sup>1</sup> in the United States. It has been widely researched and is shown to be an effective treatment for persons with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder.

## ***What is Borderline Personality Disorder?***

Borderline Personality Disorder is an umbrella term used by mental health professionals to assist in understanding a collection of symptoms that you may experience, so as to plan the most appropriate treatment based on expert research and opinion. The criteria for a diagnosis of this disorder are listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR)<sup>2</sup>. You may discuss these criteria with your doctor.

If your doctor has discussed this diagnosis with you then you may be able to relate to the following types of difficulties:

- Problems naming, understanding and controlling feelings, often feeling depressed, anxious or angry.
- Reporting suicidal feelings which you find difficult to manage.
- Often acting impulsively, in ways that can cause harm to your self, such as cutting, burning, taking overdoses or threatening to self harm.
- Worry that you will be rejected by family or friends, having fears of being left all alone.
- Your relationships are often really intense and can see-saw from being seen as really good to really bad in a short time. Relating to others and feeling secure in doing so is a significant difficulty.
- Given problems regulating feelings and coping with interpersonal relationships, you may feel unsure of who you really are, you may have feelings of being empty all which adds to your sense of isolation from others.
- Often you will have had many contacts with mental health services, having tried many medications and treatments none of which appeared to be effective in the long term.
- You most likely feel like you would like to change, but feel afraid to do so.

Borderline Personality Disorder is recognised as one of the most distressing disorders for clients and most difficult for clinicians to treat. *A Vision for Change – Report of the Expert Group on Mental Health Policy* (2006)<sup>3</sup> states that people with this disorder “can present with




histories of abusive relationships, repeated self harm behaviour, emotional instability” (Department of Health and Children, 2006, p. 162). The report highlights that Dialectical Behaviour Therapy is an effective treatment to help you if you engage in self harm behaviours as a means of coping with emotional distress.


## ***What is Dialectical Behaviour Therapy?***

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) was initially formulated as a treatment for people with interpersonal problems associated with emotion self-regulation skills and impulsive behaviours. It is a combination of cognitive-behavioural therapy enhanced with mindfulness practice and acceptance based philosophy and practice. The therapy aims to help you to “create a life worth living” by not only accepting you and those around you as they are, but also helps support you in learning new skills that you can practice with the therapy teams support.

## ***What does The Endeavour Programme involve?***

The programme aims to support you in decreasing self harm behaviours which are interfering with you living the kind of life you would like to live. The programme is a comprehensive treatment in which you will be offered the following:

-  **Two and a half hours of Skills Training Lectures each week** to assist you in learning how to:
  1. Be more aware of your thoughts, feelings and actions and how they impact on your behaviour (**Mindfulness skills**).
  2. Build skills to cope more effectively in managing stressful life events, coping in a way that is less destructive to your body and your relationships (**Distress Tolerance**).
  3. Practice skills in understanding and managing your emotions (**Emotion Regulation**).
  4. Improve your ability to relate to people and to feel more skilled and confident in doing so (**Interpersonal Effectiveness**).
  
-  **One hour Individual Therapy each week:** to help you to practice skills from the lectures and to support you in fully understanding the reason why you engage in certain behaviours and how you can take steps in changing this behaviour.
  
-  **Skills Coaching (Telephone Contact):** You will have a mobile telephone contact for your individual therapist or a crisis coach. You will be able to contact the therapist or coach in between session to advise you on what skills you can use to reduce the need to engage in self-destructive behaviours.

 **Team Consultation Meeting:** Those involved in your care will meet each week to ensure that you are fully participating in the programme and to discuss how they can help you to get the maximum benefit from the programme.

The programme runs for 12 months. During this time you will complete all of the skills lectures twice, with the aim of learning and revising the skills. Individual therapy will be weekly and any changes to schedules due to holidays etc will be discussed with you in advance. You will be given contact details of an alternative skills coach to support you in implementing your skills when your own therapist is on leave. In order for us to ensure that the programme is meeting your needs, you will be asked to complete a number of assessment measures at various time points throughout the programme.

### ***The Endeavour Programme sounds like it might be something I would like to apply for. What next?***

If you are interested in attending this training programme you will need to be referred by your doctor. S/He will complete a standard referral form which will outline your main difficulties. On receipt of the referral you will be offered an initial assessment appointment with an individual therapist from the programme. Typically you will meet this person 4-6 times for pre- screening. The aim of these sessions is to complete a number of assessment measures with you, to give you further information about the programme and to ensure that you will be willing to fully commit to the programme. If we agree that the programme meets your needs, it is possible that you might not be able to start immediately as there is a limit of **12 places**. You may be asked to remain on a waiting list.

### ***I have some more questions about the programme and whether it is right for me. Who can I contact for some answers?***

In the first instance we would encourage you speak to your doctor and seek any clarification about your diagnosis and the treatment recommendation. Having done so, if you have any further questions you can contact:

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**Principal Psychology Manager,**  
**The Endeavour Programme Team Leader,**  
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#### References:

1. Linehan, M. (1993) *Cognitive Behaviour Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder*, Guilford Press, London.
2. American Psychiatric Association (2000) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 4<sup>th</sup> Ed Text Revision*, American Psychiatric Publishing Inc., USA.
3. Department of Health and Children (2006) *A Vision for Change- Report of the Expert Group on Mental Health Policy*, Stationery Office, Dublin.