The Endeavour
‘Family Connections’ Programme

Support when you know someone with Borderline Personality Disorder

Information Leaflet

HSE South
North Lee Adult Mental Health Service
Family Connections Programme

April 2012
**What is The Endeavour ‘Family Connections’ Programme?**

Family Connections (FC) is a group treatment programme for family members/ significant others of people with a diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). You have been invited to participate on this programme as your loved one is already attending North Lee Adult Mental Health Services. They have nominated you as a key person in their life whom they would like to avail of this support.

FC was developed in the United States by two psychologists, Perry Hoffman and Alan Fruzzetti, with the help of multiple family members and individuals with BPD. FC is based on two well-known theoretical models. The first of these is the stress-coping-and-adaptation (SCA) model of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and the second is the treatment model of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)\(^1\). DBT is an evidence based treatment that has shown to be successful in treating BPD and related problems such as emotional instability, suicidal thoughts, self-harming and self destructive behaviours. This is the premise of our already running ‘Endeavour’ programme for patients with BPD. You will learn more about these on the programme itself.

FC was designed to bring family members/ significant others together with two main goals:

- 🌟 Supporting people in their efforts to be emotionally involved with their relative attending the ‘Endeavour Programme’ in more effective ways

- 🌟 Increasing their own wellbeing which may in turn have a positive effect on the wellbeing of their loved one.
Families living with Borderline Personality Disorder?

Families/significant others are often the first line of care for their relatives and have assumed multiple roles such as advocate, caregiver, coach and guardian. Research indicates that stress associated with having a relative with mental illness can result in increased sense of responsibility (often termed burden in literature), depression, grief and isolation.

The challenges facing family members/ significant others of individuals with BPD are often of such magnitude that they can, over time, deplete the family members' capacity to cope effectively, compromising their health and life agenda. FC aims to help people reduce their stress, distress and pressure to assume responsibility, while increasing education and effectiveness in self care. This has benefits for the individual themselves and their relative with BPD. ²

What does the ‘Family Connections’ Programme involve?

FC is a 12-week multiple family programme (i.e. you and family members of other participants on the Endeavour Programme) and will take place every Wednesday evening from 6 – 8 pm. in Inniscarraig House. Each session will include specific practice exercises and homework.

The programme was designed to meet 3 needs of family members:

1) Education about BPD and family functioning

2) Individual and family skills, to help with managing their own negative reactions and building better and more satisfying relationships

3) Social support, from other group members who have lived through similar experiences and are living with similar situations. ²
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 before, throughout and following the programme. This data can contribute to the growing body of knowledge about how carers cope when their relative has a BPD diagnosis. You will therefore be asked to complete a consent form to participate in research that is taking place in the Department. This is enclosed and we would appreciate if you could complete it and bring it to your initial meeting.

If you have any questions about the programme and whether it is right for you or any concerns about participating in the research please contact:

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References: