

Cognitive Adaptation Training Research Project 2013

Cognitive Adaptation Training (or CAT for short) is a therapy to help people with schizophrenia or a psychotic illness who experience difficulties carrying out daily living tasks due to the cognitive impairments associated with their illness.

The mental health services are introducing this therapy in 2013

Thank one for taking the time to read this information leaflet.



**If one have any further questions
please don't hesitate to ask the
OT or psychiatric nurse involved
in one's CAT programme
OR
contact Áine O'Reilly at the
number below.**

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Cognitive Adaptation Training



Information Leaflet

Cognitive Adaptation Training

What is Cognitive Adaptation Training?

- Cognitive Adaptation Training (CAT) is a set of strategies that can help people in their recovery from serious mental illness.
- It is an organized approach that uses environmental supports. It is based upon the idea that we can rearrange the environment and teach skills to help overcome the difficulties experienced by many people with schizophrenia.

How do these environmental supports help?

Environmental supports in CAT help to bypass problems with thinking and motivation that often get in the way of recovery.



What outcomes can the person expect?

Cognitive Adaptation Training is used in the following areas

- CAT can lead to individuals being more organised in their home environment thus promoting healthier living spaces.
- It can lead to improvements in hygiene, including being dressed more appropriately, and feeling better about one's appearance.
- It can lead to taking medications independently and reducing symptoms of mental illness.
- It can also help meet goals for having friends, being involved in leisure activities that bring enjoyment, and becoming involved in volunteerism or paid employment.

The participant usually chooses the area that they would prefer to work on. Altogether, CAT can lead to people living more independently and having fuller lives.

What kinds of environmental supports are used and where?

These supports are integrated into the routines and living spaces and include a range of tools. Examples include

1. Signs reminding one what to do. Reminders and alarms to prompt one when its time to do it.
2. Checklists for helping one complete daily activities.
3. Schedules to help one organise their day.
4. Pill containers to assist one in taking one's medication regularly.
5. Organisation of belongings (making sure everything has a place).

Who will carry out this treatment?

As part of this project, 28 mental health professionals from different teams in the country have been trained to deliver CAT.

What is involved?

Assessment

To start with there is a period of assessment which involves:

1. An assessment of one's cognitive skills to identify one's strengths and weaknesses
2. An assessment of one's home environment and one's daily activities to identify possible areas that could be improved.

Setting Goals

When the assessments are completed, the next step is that the participant and the therapist set goals to work towards. Participants are an equal partner in this process and no goals will be set without their consent.

Therapy

The therapist has a manual that will help guide treatment and suggest solutions to practical problems that one may be encountering.

Research

As this form of therapy is new in Ireland we are researching the outcome. Your therapist will give you more information on this process.

