



Behavioural Family Therapy (BFT)

Information for service users and carers

TESS



SUPPORT FOR CARERS, RELATIVES & FRIENDS

Having a relative who is experiencing mental health problems can be extremely distressing for the whole family. It can be difficult to know where to turn for support.

1. WHAT IS BEHAVIOURAL FAMILY THERAPY?

Behavioural Family Therapy (BFT) is a type of practical support, which aims to help families cope with the difficulties associated with mental ill health that they face on a day-to-day basis. It involves a number of sessions where a healthcare / social care worker works together with a family to try to tackle any problems the family is facing.

The first sessions include discussions about relevant mental health problems and the possible help and support that is available and how that can be accessed.

Further sessions go on to look at simple ways of improving family communication in order to reduce stress.

Each member of the family is encouraged to work towards personal goals, with the help of other family members.

2. HOW CAN BFT HELP?

BFT can:

- ❖ Help you to understand the specific illness your loved one is going through; the medications, treatments and services that may be available
- ❖ Offer support to you and your family
- ❖ Help you to solve problems together
- ❖ Help you to achieve personal goals
- ❖ Help you to get on better as a family

3. WHY WORK WITH THE FAMILY?

Approximately half of individuals with severe mental health difficulties live with their families, making families a vital source of support in maintaining mental well-being.

When a relative becomes unwell, all family members experience stress. Family work aims to strengthen the family's ability to cope and reduce the stress associated with mental health conditions.

Research has shown that family interventions, such as Behavioural Family Therapy (BFT), can help maintain good mental health and alleviate stress for all family members. Support from family and friends is often a crucial factor in recovery from mental health challenges, in particular eating disorders.

Most families provide invaluable care and support to their loved ones, and they, in turn, deserve guidance and assistance to continue their important role effectively.

4. WHO WOULD PROVIDE THE HELP?

Behavioural Family Therapy (BFT) is delivered by mental health professionals who have received specialised training in this approach. Across NHS Lanarkshire, over 100 staff members have been trained in BFT.

As our service supports students from various disciplines, including Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Psychology, there may be occasions where we invite students to observe or participate as part of their learning. However, this would always be discussed with you and your family in advance, and your consent would be sought before any student involvement.

5. WHERE WOULD SESSIONS TAKE PLACE?

Generally you would be seen at your own home, but if you prefer, you could be seen within a clinic setting.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND THE USE OF PATIENT INFORMATION

NHS Lanarkshire take care to ensure your personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure, and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on our website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice.

NHS Lanarkshire - for local services and the latest health news visit www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Lanarkshire General
Enquiry Line: 0300 30 30 243

NHS inform - The national health information service for Scotland.
www.nhsinform.co.uk
Tel No: 0800 22 44 88

If you need this information in another language or format, please e-mail: Translation.
Services@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk



www.careopinion.org.uk

Pub. date:	Apr 2025
Review date:	Apr 2027
Issue No:	04
Department:	TESS
Clinical Lead:	

XS PIL.BEHAVF.25_06009.L