



INFORMATION

for relatives of children and adolescents

WELCOME

As a parent of a child or adolescent with a mental illness, you have a natural responsibility for your daughter or son, and are therefore an important source of support during the course of their treatment. In the same way, you are an important resource and partner for those of us in charge of their treatment. Your involvement will improve the quality of your child's course of treatment with us.

At Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark, we would therefore very much like to involve you, and possibly siblings. Our wish is for a partnership based on mutual respect and trust, and with your child's needs at the centre.



RELATIVES AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES – CAPITAL REGION OF DENMARK

As a parent, you have a unique knowledge of your child and your child's development.

By sharing this knowledge with us, we can achieve a joint understanding of your child, and the way in which the illness affects him or her. Your knowledge enables us to have a better understanding of the child or adolescent's difficulties, while also making us aware of the resources that are also present. Overall, it enables us to tailor and target the treatment precisely to suit your child.

As a parent and sibling, you are also a special source of support for the child. You can act as a mouthpiece, and your backup and care are important, both during and after treatment. Mental illness may be associated with helplessness and frustration, and as a result, at times close relatives will be particularly needed.

CONSENT TO TREATMENT

As the person with parental rights, you must give your consent to your child's treatment. Adolescents over the age of 15, who are considered to meet the right requirements, may give their consent for their own treatment without the parents. However, we always seek to inform and include the parents in the decision.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY IN DIVORCE CASES

Examination and treatment by the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services require the consent of both custodians. Where only one parent has custody, it is this parent who can give consent.

If only one parent has authority over the child or adolescent, the law allows us to work with this parent only during the course of the child or adolescent's treatment. We would encourage the other parent to be involved where possible. Both parents may have important knowledge that may benefit the child during the treatment.

A parent who does not share the parental authority has a right to ask to be kept informed of the examination and treatment.

YOUR ROLE IN THE TREATMENT

As a parent, you will be invited to discussions at which we will jointly run through the child or adolescent's upbringing and development from pregnancy through to the current examination. For example, we are interested in information about family circumstances, the child or adolescent's linguistic, motor function and social development, and information about concentration, temperament and mood.

This is important to create as balanced and broad a picture of the child or adolescent as possible. We will therefore ask for your permission to obtain information from places, such as day care centres and schools, and from any previous therapists.

When the examination/treatment begins, an examination and treatment plan will be drawn up that will, continually, be evaluated and revised as the examination and treatment progresses. Your information, wishes and comments will be incorporated in this plan, and you will be able to see it constantly throughout the course of treatment. You also have the right to be given a copy of the plan. For adolescents over the age of 15, the examination and treatment plan will be given to them and reviewed directly.

Treatment consists of talks with the child or adolescent and, in some cases, medication. If the person providing the treatment considers that the child or adolescent should be offered medication, we will discuss this with you. Adolescents over the age of 15 may themselves provide consent for treatment with medication, if the adolescent is determined to understand the consequences of his or her choice.

In some cases, the whole family, including brothers and sisters, will be offered family therapy/multi-family therapy. Here, the whole family works on changing routines and habits that are inappropriate considering the child or adolescent's illness. In

some units, it may be a matter of the parents taking part in the daily treatment effort.

CONTACT AND TREATMENT PLAN

Each child or adolescent undergoing treatment in the unit will be assigned one or more contacts. The contact monitors the treatment closely and ensures there is continuity between the various parts of the treatment.

During the first week, the doctor draws up a treatment plan in conjunction with the child or adolescent, parents and staff who are involved in the treatment. It is always submitted for approval from a consultant or specialist.

The treatment plan is continually updated and evaluated during the stay, and it is always possible to obtain a copy of the most recently updated version.

EXAMINATION AND TREATMENT

The treatment of mental illness usually consists of a combination of several forms of treatment.

The vast majority of children and adolescents are examined and treated as outpatients. In other words, they are not admitted; instead, they are given treatment at Mental Health Centre for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at fixed appointments during daytime hours. Some examinations and treatments, however, require the child or adolescent to attend every day during daytime hours for a period of time, or to be admitted as an inpatient around the clock.

The most common forms of treatment are:

- Talks or talk therapy – either individually, in a group or with the family
- Medicinal treatment
- Education about the illness for both the child and the parents/family (psychoeducation)
- Environmental therapy – this includes helping children or adolescents, admitted as day patients or inpatients, to cope with their difficulties and make the best possible use of their resources.

You can find out more about the various forms of treatment at www.psykiatri-regionh.dk.

Treatment and care are handled by various professional groups, such as doctors, psychologists, nurses, educationists, social and health assistants, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social advisors, etc. The staff always wears a clearly legible nameplate and is subject to professional secrecy.

BEFORE DISCHARGE

After a course of treatment, many children and adolescents require an offer of follow-up treatment and support from the municipality. This may take the form of social support to your child or support from the school. As a parent, you will be involved in the discussions as to what is needed in this area.

We will inform your municipality as to what we feel the child needs. The municipality will decide what to offer the child. As a parent, you must give your consent for us to exchange information about your child with the municipality. Adolescents over the age of 15 can give this consent themselves.

URGENT CARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

If your child will need urgent care, can you approach the 24-hour Psychiatric Emergency Department for children and adolescents in Glostrup. For further information, see www.psykiatri-regionh.dk/akut or the Akuthjælp app.

HELP FOR RELATIVES

It can be straining when your child is affected by mental illness. It is not unusual for you as a relative to need help. It is important to take care of any problems so there are no unduly major consequences for you and your family.

At Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark, we can help by discussing the illness and treatment with you, so you are clear as to what illness we are dealing with, and what treatment your child is receiving. We can also help you to look for

support, for example with an organisation for patients and relatives.

Find out more about patient and relative associations at www.psykiatri-regionh.dk/patientinfo.

It is important for you to speak to us if you are unsure about your role as a relative. We like to arrange the work we do with you, so that you and your family's resources are taken into consideration.

CRISIS HELP

Some parents experience such severe reactions that they need actual treatment. This form of treatment is given outside Mental Health Centre for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry by a psychologist or other trained therapist. Your GP will refer you to this therapist.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Just as it can be straining to be the parent of a child or adolescent with mental illness, it can also be very stressful to be the brother or sister of someone with mental illness. If there are other children in the family, they can find it hard to understand what is happening with their sister or brother, and they may be very worried about them.

Often, parents will be very much preoccupied with the child who is ill. This places a strain both on your time and your emotions, and it can be difficult to have anything left over for the other children. It is important to explain to siblings, according to their age and maturity, what is wrong with their brother or sister. Alternatively, many children come up with their own explanations, which can mean they take on feelings of blame for the illness, or misunderstand the situation in another way.

If you need help telling siblings about the illness, we would be happy to provide you with advice and guidance on how to handle such a discussion.

OTHER RELATIVES

If the parents agree, other adults, who are important to the child, can also become involved in the course of treatment. This may be grandparents or other adults close to the child, who have an interest in following and contributing to the course of treatment.

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR OPINION

We are constantly striving to develop Mental Health Centre for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and would like to know you and your child's experience of your stay and treatment. You are therefore most welcome to contact the staff if you have ideas for improvement, so we can continue to improve our offerings.

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE?

www.psykinfo-regionh.dk.

You can also consult with PsykInfo for further information, counselling and guidance on mental illness. PsykInfo is a mental information centre, located in central Copenhagen, which caters to all citizens who need to know more about mental illness.

See www.psykinfo-regionh.dk.

SINCERELY

Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark

This booklet is for you as a patient at Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark and for your relatives. With this booklet, we want to help you and your family experience a good and comprehensive course of treatment - and good cooperation with the staff at Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark.

We place great emphasis on keeping you well informed about the treatment throughout the course of treatment ,and you are always welcome to ask questions.

THE PATIENT AT THE CENTRE

The treatment at Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark often consists of a combination of therapies, and is always based on the individual and immediate needs of the patient. No courses of treatment are identical.

The staff of the mental health center has a professional comprehension into how mental illnesses can develop and be treated. We want to hear how you experience your illness and what your treatment goal is. Both are considered when we plan the treatment together.

The goal is for you to be either healed or feel significantly better as a result of the treatment. It varies when and to what extent people with mental illness recovers. But with the right treatment, anyone can make progress and create or re-create everyday life.

REGION HOVEDSTADENS PSYKIATRI (MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES – CAPITAL REGION OF DENMARK)

Many people encounter a mental illness during the course of their lifetime. At Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark, every year we treat approx. 41,000 children and adults for a variety of mental illnesses. The treatment is done on an outpatient basis by visiting teams and, where necessary, by Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark.

Mental Health Services – Capital Region of Denmark

Kristineberg 3
DK - 2100 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark

Tel.: 3864 0000
www.psykiatri-regionh.dk

Graphic design: RegionH Design
Photo: Phillip Drago Jørgensen
2014