



improving  
access  
to Psychological Therapies

Care Services Improvement Partnership **CSIP**

National Institute for  
**Mental Health in England**

# Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme exists to help reduce the current social and economic costs of mental illness in England today. It has developed from a government manifesto commitment to improve access to 'talking therapies' and is supported by guidance released by the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE).

## Too few people with mental health problems are currently accessing treatment

According to the latest figures at any one time 6 million adults in the UK are suffering from depression or anxiety disorders and of these only a quarter are accessing treatment of any kind. More people commit suicide than die in transport accidents in the UK each year.

## Psychological therapies work

Research indicates that not only do psychological therapies work but that those who recover from depression through therapy are less likely to relapse than those who have only received medication. Improving people's mental health also improves their physical health. It is estimated that poor mental health can reduce life expectancy by up to 10 years.

## Many sections of society can benefit from accessible psychological therapies

Deprived communities suffer more from mental illness than wealthier ones so helping improve the lives of communities who suffer mental illness helps the poorest in society. It is estimated that one family in three is affected by mental illness. Helping those who suffer from mental illness improves the lives of many more people than just the sufferer.

## The economic cost of poor access to treatment is enormous

More people currently receive Incapacity Benefits due to mental illness than receive Unemployment Benefit. Currently one million people receive Incapacity Benefit due to mental illness and it is estimated that the cost of mental illness is 2% of GDP in the UK. Therefore there is a huge economic benefit to improving the mental health of the country. The cost of treating people is more than offset by the potential savings made in increased tax revenue and GDP.

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme has been developed to address these issues and to improve mental wellbeing, promote social inclusion and raise economic productivity.