SELF-MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

This section describes self-management strategies that can be employed to help patients manage their difficulties. These strategies promote hope for change and can help manage the crisis and move the patient towards a safe discharge. These competences are for healthcare professionals who have had appropriate training in delivering self-management strategies.

Knowledge

An ability to draw on knowledge that coping strategy enhancement, psychoeducation, and relapse prevention are forms of self-management, which help patients to manage their difficulties by equipping them with strategies to successfully live with the physical, social, and emotional impact of their mental health difficulties

An ability to draw on knowledge that coping strategy enhancement should:

- build upon the existing strengths that the patient, and their family and carers already have
- target core psychological issues underpinning the crisis
- be idiosyncratic and adapted to the patient's presenting needs
- help teach the patient new strategies (for example, distraction techniques, relaxation, mindfulness, and activity scheduling)

An ability to draw on knowledge that psychoeducation should:

- adopt a biopsychosocial model to understanding and managing the crisis, including a focus on the patient's social and cultural context
- target core psychological issues underpinning the crisis
- deliver specific information about the crisis and its management using a range of 'user-friendly' formats
- teach, and allow practice of, effective crisis management skills

An ability to draw on knowledge that the primary objective of psychoeducation is to:

- normalise the overwhelming nature of patient's current or past experiences
- increase compassionate understanding of the factors that have contributed to the crisis, including the individual, interpersonal, social, cultural, and political
- increase awareness of the causes of crisis in an attempt to prevent future ones
- help the client detect the early warning signs of crisis
- encourage engagement in treatment (medication and psychosocial therapies)
- avoid or decrease substance use and misuse

An ability to draw on knowledge that a relapse prevention plan draws together the key elements of psychoeducation and coping strategy enhancement such as:

- the identification of the early warning signs of crisis/relapse indicators
- the mapping of the early warning signs in order
- the identification of coping strategies to manage these
- an ability to do this in a compassionate and normalising way

An ability to deliver self-management strategies to those in crisis

An ability to collaboratively deliver coping strategy enhancement, psychoeducation, and relapse prevention which is based on a comprehensive assessment and formulation of the patient's needs and priorities

An ability to increase the patient's awareness of mental health crises by conveying comprehensive information and adopting an open and collaborative approach that encourages dialogue in order:

- to establish what patients already know

	to help patients discuss and debate the stance they take
	empower them to make changes, where possible
An ability to convey basic information about mental health crises, including the identification of:	
	the potential causes and triggers of the crisis (including individual, interpersonal, social, and cultural triggers)
	symptoms and experiences (including thoughts, feelings, behaviours, interpersonal difficulties) which are part of the crisis
An ability to discuss issues relating to engagement with mental health services and treatment, such as:	
	patterns of engagement in treatment and care
	impacts of non-engagement
	factors that may influence engagement such as stigma, previous negative experiences of mental health services, and medication side-effects
An ability to help patients to identify:	
	the key indicators of relapse and the order in which they present
	a trusted person or people who could help support them to manage future crises
	their own strengths and resources
	personal coping strategies

An ability to help patients develop a structured self-management or relapse prevention plan to manage their crises, which includes:	
	the identification of the early warning signs of crisis and relapse indicators
	the mapping of the early warning signs in order
	the identification of coping strategies to manage these
An ability to deliver a self-management or relapse prevention plan in a collaborative and empowering manner to ensure patients feel confident to implement the strategies independently	
An ability to deliver a self-management or relapse prevention plan which is recovery focused and enables patients to manage their mental health difficulties and prevent future crises	
An ability to help the patient utilise medication management strategies to prevent future mental health crises by:	
	listening to them and validating their concerns
	considering the relative merits of medication/adherence
	considering the impacts of medication, including any side effects
	considering their relationship to medication (including any ambivalence about taking medication)
	troubleshooting any medication issues
	helping the patient consider how best to discuss medication-related issues with their clinical team
	helping patients whose preference is for a “no medication” option to consider how this might be negotiated and managed with relevant parties (for example, including a safety plan that details how indicators of relapse would be responded to)
An ability to help the patient draft an advanced statement/decision outlining how they would like to be treated during future hospitalisations, including treatments they would like to refuse	