

TABLE 5.4 A summary of the NICE guidance relating to anxiety

| Anxiety disorder                                                                            | Recommended interventions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Source                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Panic disorder                                                                              | <p><i>In order of length of effect, most effective first:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBT</li> <li>• an SSRI antidepressant licensed for panic disorder</li> <li>• self-help based on CBT principles</li> </ul> <p><i>Not recommended: benzodiazepine medication</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Guidance on panic disorder and generalised anxiety disorder (NICE, 2007) |
| Generalized anxiety disorder (social anxiety, health anxiety and phobias are included here) | <p><i>In the short term:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short-term (2–4 weeks) use of benzodiazepine medication</li> </ul> <p><i>In the longer term, in order of length of effect, most effective first:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBT</li> <li>• an SSRI antidepressant licensed for panic disorder</li> <li>• self-help based on CBT principles</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Guidance on panic disorder and generalised anxiety disorder (NICE, 2007) |
| Obsessive-compulsive disorder                                                               | <p><i>Where there is mild functional impairment:</i></p> <p><b>low intensity</b> (&lt;10 sessions) psychological interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitated self-help using CBT-based principles, particularly exposure and response prevention (ERP)</li> <li>• telephone CBT (including ERP)</li> <li>• group CBT (including ERP)</li> </ul> <p><i>Where there is moderate functional impairment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an SSRI antidepressant</li> <li>• <b>high intensity</b> (&gt;10 sessions) psychological treatment involving CBT (including ERP)</li> </ul> | Guidance on OCD (NICE, 2005a)                                            |
| Post-traumatic stress disorder                                                              | <p><i>Either:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• trauma-focused CBT</li> <li>or</li> <li>• eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing (EMDR)</li> </ul> <p><i>Not recommended: drug treatments as a first line treatment.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Guidance on PTSD (NICE, 2005b)                                           |

### Cognitive behavioural interventions

Given their dominance in the treatment of anxiety, the bulk of this section will focus on those interventions that are underpinned by cognitive behavioural principles. To alleviate any distressing psychological symptoms, cognitive behavioural interventions may be combined with a medication such as an SSRI antidepressant

Prymachuk, S (2011). Mental health.  
Nursing: An Evidence-  
Based Introduction.

SAGE - LONDON.