

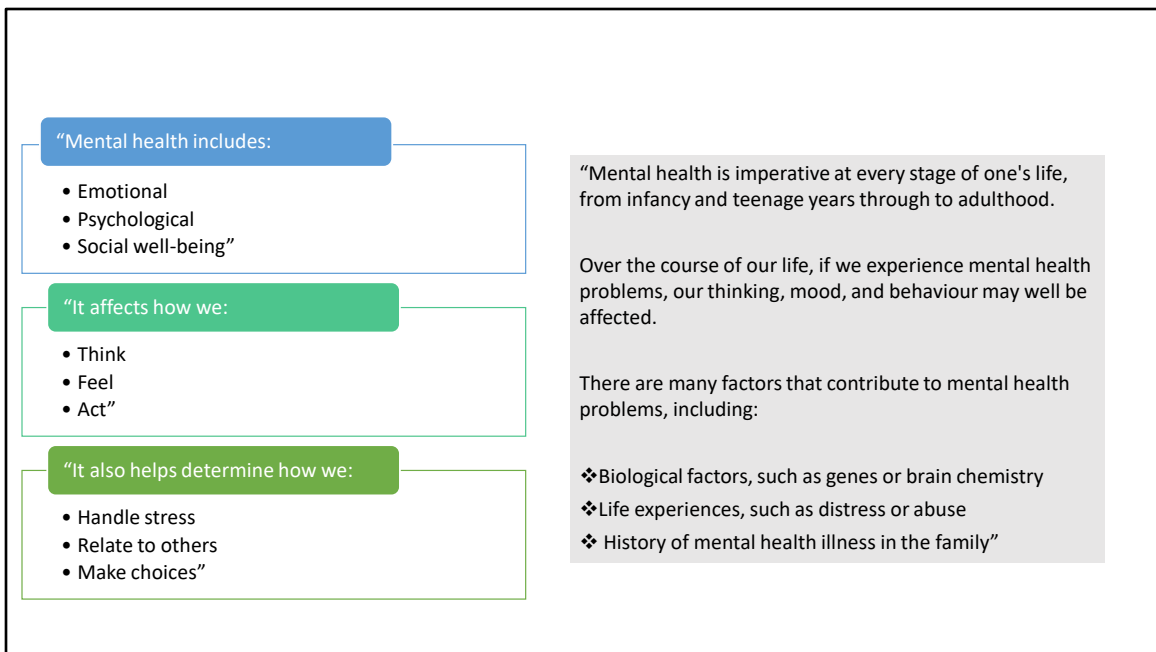
## Depressive Disorder

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A depressive disorder is a serious mood disorder that is very common. According to charity Mind in any given week 3 in every 100 people will experience depression. Three-quarters of people with depression will not be receiving treatment even where clinically indicated. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), an estimated 300 million people accounting for 4.4% of the world population are affected by depression (WHO,2019).



## CASE STUDY: Felicia a 44-year- old female with depression

- Single mother of 3, all under 5 years old.
- Her marriage broke down prior to the beginning of the first lockdown (March 2020).
- Soon after her partner left ,she began to lose interest in things she previously loved.
- She began to neglect her own personal care.
- She refused to pick calls from her relatives and friends.
- Felicia's other symptoms were loneliness, difficulty coping with life and sadness.

After many weeks of persuasion by a friend, she sought assistance from her GP and was diagnosed with depression. She was then put on a course of antidepressants to help with her mood.

## CLASSIFICATION WITHIN ICD-10

According to the ICD-10, three varieties:

- ❖ "Mild depressive episode
- ❖ Moderate depressive episode
- ❖ Severe depressive episode"

"With depression the individual usually suffers from depressed mood, loss of interest in the things they loved and found fun, and reduced energy leading to increased fatigability and diminished activity. Marked tiredness after only slight effort is common."

"Other common symptoms:

- ❖ reduced concentration and attention
- ❖ reduced self-esteem and self-confidence
- ❖ ideas of guilt and unworthiness, even in a mild type of episode
- ❖ bleak and pessimistic views of the future
- ❖ ideas or acts of self-harm or suicide
- ❖ disturbed sleep
- ❖ diminished appetite" (ICD-10)

Depression is a common mental disorder affecting over 264 million people worldwide, and it is one of the major mental health disorders in the world. Depression is defined as bitterness, loss of interest or happiness, guilt or low self-esteem, restlessness or restless hunger, sluggishness, and helpless concentration. Likewise, depressed people can have various complaints for no apparent reason, similar to what is described in the case study. The disorder can be permanent or recurring. Severely individuals lose the ability to work or do things they use to love doing before.

At worst, depression can promote self-destruction.

Prevention programs appear to reduce distress for young people and adults too (WHO, 2019).

## AETIOLOGY

The origin of depression is unknown; however, several factors have been identified as being the cause including:

- ❖ Genetic inheritance
- ❖ Environmental – stressful life events / insecure attachment
- ❖ Childhood experiences
- ❖ Other mental health disorders
- ❖ Physical health problems
- ❖ Medication, recreational drugs and alcohol
- ❖ Sleep, diet and exercise (GOLDBERG, 2006).

Historically it was believed that mental disorders including depression were caused by demon possession until further studies identified some of the factors above.

The proponents of this theory obviously were influenced by the Bible particularly the casting of demons by Jesus Christ.

Genetics – some studies suggest that depression is an inherent problem, and this means that it can be genetically transferred from one generation to the other.

Environmental – some studies also suggest that the environment in which a person is brought up makes one vulnerable to developing depression.

You can also have social economic factors which could be poverty, poor education, unemployment, social isolation and exposure to major life events.

Some studies even suggest that your working conditions and your working environment can bring on depression as well (GOLDBERG, 2006).

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

### PSYCHOTIC DEPRESSION

- ❖ "Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there)
- ❖ Delusions (false beliefs)
- ❖ Paranoia (wrongly believing that others are trying to harm you)"

### MAJOR OR CLINICAL DEPRESSION

- ❖ "Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- ❖ Unreasonable feelings of self-reproach or excessive and inappropriate guilt
- ❖ Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, or any suicidal behaviour
- ❖ Complaints or evidence of diminished ability to think or concentrate, such as indecisiveness or vacillation
- ❖ Change in psychomotor activity, with agitation or retardation (either subjective or objective)
- ❖ Sleep disturbance of any type
- ❖ Change in appetite" (ICD-10,2013)

Whilst there are nine types of depression in this presentation, I will be focusing on the signs and symptoms of psychotic and major or clinical depressive orders.

According to the ICD-10, in major or clinical depression, the individual loses confidence and self-esteem, they feel worthless, they feel suicidal, they lose interest in the things that they usually love doing, they have the feeling of guilt, self-reproach, they also have a diminished ability to think or concentrate, such as indecisiveness (ICD-10, 2013).

## DIAGNOSIS

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Physical examination and diagnostic evaluation

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Discussing any family history of depression or other mental illness

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Personal interview

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Self-reported experiences of a person

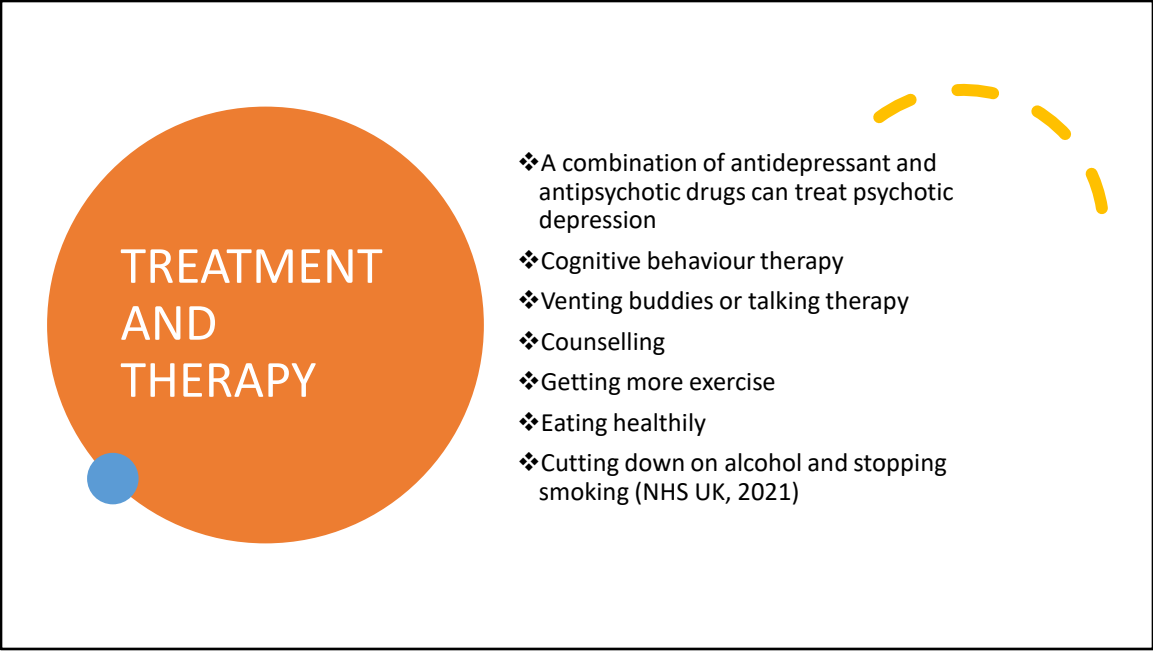
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Abnormalities in behaviour reported by family member, friends and co-workers

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Secondary signs observed by a clinician in a clinical assessment (NHS UK, 2021)

It is generally the view that diagnosis of depression is difficult to make due to the all-encompassing nature of depression symptoms. There are, however, many ways in which medical professionals go to reach definite conclusions about depression diagnosis. Personal interviews are by far the main procedures used to make such a diagnosis (NHS UK, 2021)



## TREATMENT AND THERAPY

- ❖ A combination of antidepressant and antipsychotic drugs can treat psychotic depression
- ❖ Cognitive behaviour therapy
- ❖ Venting buddies or talking therapy
- ❖ Counselling
- ❖ Getting more exercise
- ❖ Eating healthily
- ❖ Cutting down on alcohol and stopping smoking (NHS UK, 2021)

It appears that anti-depressants are the most common treatment for depression but in general, the treatment option to a large extent will depend on the severity of depression, the kind of treatment the individual is on now, how the individual has responded to other medications or whether the individual is pregnant, planning to get pregnant, or breastfeeding.

Depression can be treated with Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), this therapy aims to help understand their thoughts and behaviour and how they affect them.

CBT recognises that events in the past may have shaped them, but it concentrates mostly on how they can change the way they think, feel and behave in the present. It also teaches them how to overcome their negative thoughts, for example being able to challenge their hopeless feelings.

Counselling is a form of therapy that helps the person think about the problems they are experiencing in their life so that they can find new ways in dealing with them.

Counselling supports them to find solutions to their problems, even though the counsellor will not tell them what to do they can talk in confidence to them, and they will support them by offering practical advice.

Eating healthier, cutting down on alcohol and stopping smoking can also help in treating depression. (NHS UK, 2021c)

## POLICIES

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“Better access to mental health services and shorter waiting times a priority for NHS England

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Reducing mental health problems is a priority for Public Health England, the new national public health service

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Making mental health part of the new national measure of wellbeing, so it's more likely to be considered when government creates policy”

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“Enough money to give more people access to psychological therapies, including adults with depression, and children and young people

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Enough funding for the campaign against mental health stigma and discrimination” (Department of Health and social Care, 2015)

Every government should make mental health a priority, this reduces mental health disorders in the country, making mental health a part of the national measures of wellbeing, government should provide enough money to give more people access to psychological therapies including counselling, CBT and other therapies for adults with depression and in children and young people also. There should be funding for schools to prioritise mental health in young people, government should provide enough money for charities and organisations to be able to campaign against mental health, stigmatisation and discrimination (Department of Health and social care, 2019).

## LEGISLATIONS

- ❖ **Mental Capacity Act (2005):** forms and guidance for local authorities on the deprivation of liberty safeguards
- ❖ **Mental Health Act (1983):** is the main piece of legislation that covers the assessment, treatment and rights of people with a mental health disorder
- ❖ **Mental Health Act (2015):** code of practice completed parliamentary scrutiny unchallenged
- ❖ **WHO Mental Health Action Plan (2013-2020):** supported by the World Health Assembly in 2013, sees the fundamental role of emotional well-being in achieving well-being for all.

According to the NHS (2019), The Mental Health Act (1983) is the main piece of legislation that covers the assessment, treatment and rights of people with a mental health disorder. People detained under the Mental Health Act need urgent treatment for a mental health disorder and are at risk of harm to themselves or others (NHS, 2019).

The Mental Health Act (2015), “revised code seeks to provide stronger protection for patients and clarify roles, rights and responsibilities. This includes involving the patient and as appropriate, their families and carers in discussions about the patient’s care at every stage; providing personalised care, minimising the use of inappropriate blanket restrictions, restrictive interventions and the use of police cells as places of safety” (MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK, 2015).

The WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020, supported by the World Health Assembly in 2013, sees the fundamental role of emotional well-being in achieving well-being for all. The agreement has 4 key aims:

- ✓ More assured management and administration of psychological well-being
- ✓ Organized comprehensive and unified administrations for psychological well-being and social consideration in territorial contexts
- ✓ Performing promotion and avoidance techniques in data framework strengthening,

testing and analysis.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

People with mental health illness should be treated with their disorder

Care and support should be put in place for people with mental health disorders

“Deliver high quality treatment and care which is known to be effective and acceptable

Mental health services must be available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, based on sound evidence of best practice

Promote their safety and that of their carers, staff and the wider public”

Wellness structures must be put in place to address the burden of mental health issues adequately.

The growing problem of low quality of care for many people receiving treatment should also be addressed.

Care and support has to be put in place for people with psychological illnesses receiving care from health administrations.

They often need help to develop educational projects that suit their needs and find businesses and housing that will allow them to survive and be dynamic in their

communities.



## CONCLUSION

- This presentation has shown that depression is a **common mental health condition** within the wider society.
- A wide **range of factors contribute** to the onset of depression, some are environmental and biological.
- The signs and symptoms of depression appear to be similar compared to other mental health conditions.
- **Persons with depression also have rights which need to be respected** and this is enshrined in the Mental Capacity Act.
- There is **no uniformity** in the treatment of depression – there is **no one size fit all approach**. This means that a patient's individual circumstances is crucial in determining the treatment approach.

This presentation has identified depression as a common mental health condition which is pervasive within the population. Additionally, several factors have been identified as being the cause of depression. This presentation has also shown the various signs and symptoms of depression and more importantly the treatment options used by medical professionals have been fully explored. The presentation concludes with national policies and legislations which underpin mental health and this section, a broad range of legislations which I believe are at the forefront of mental health treatment have been explored.

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