



## SUSTAINABLE MENTAL HEALTH GUIDES

# PATIENT EMPOWERMENT

**Empowering patients and carers to manage their health conditions has been shown to lead to better health outcomes.**

It can also reduce exclusive reliance on drug prescription, reduce hospital admissions and appointments, as well as being a more environmentally **sustainable** approach. Mild to moderate mental health conditions benefit most from this approach.

### Tools for managing symptoms:



Providing tools with which patients can better self **monitor symptoms** can enable more accurate diagnosis and support at time of need.

**Example:** [TrueColours.nhs.uk](https://www.truecolours.nhs.uk) is a website which allows patients to text symptoms to their personal account. A history of symptoms and life events is graphed and can help the patient and clinician analysis.

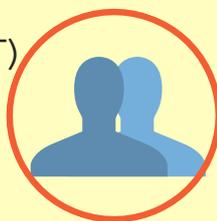
### Education for patients & communities:

Providing guidance on **how to care for oneself** both physically and mentally can be a simple but effective way of reducing rates of anxiety and other mental health conditions, especially at vulnerable times such as when leaving hospital.



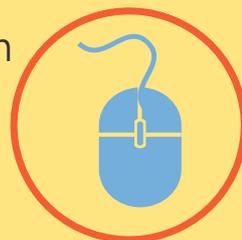
**Example:** The NHS Hillingdon Trust provided guides and follow up phone calls for patients with COPD. This reduced A&E readmission rates to 16% from 42% and levels of anxiety in COPD patients fell from 23% to 3%.

**Peer support facilities** and **alternative online treatments** (e.g. digital CBT) can empower people to **supplement** existing support.



### Tools for managing patient records:

Many GP practices now enable patients to access their own records, through **Patients Online**. This can empower patients to stay up to date and take a role in care management.



**Co-creating care plans:** Providing the opportunity for **patient preference** when creating care plans can improve patient outcomes.

### For more detailed information on interventions and case studies:

Guidance for Commissioners of Financially, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Mental Health Services is available from: <https://sustainablehealthcare.org.uk/resources/publications>