



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.

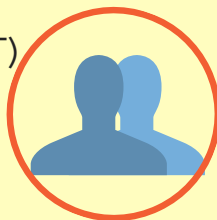
Education for patients & communities:

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.



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

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.



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>