

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

Adjustment Disorder – A stress-related condition that occurs when an individual has difficulty adapting to a major life change. Related terms: stressor, coping, resilience. Example: a patient experiencing persistent sadness after moving homes. Practical application: early identification and brief counseling to develop coping strategies. Challenge: distinguishing it from normal grief and depressive episodes.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – Potentially traumatic events occurring before age 18, such as abuse or household dysfunction. Related terms: trauma, risk factor, long-term health impact. Example: a client with a history of parental substance misuse presenting with anxiety. Practical application: screening questionnaires to inform care plans. Challenge: clients may be reluctant to disclose sensitive information.

Affirmative Approach – A supportive method that validates a person's feelings and experiences without judgment. Related terms: person-centred care, empathy, validation. Example: acknowledging a teenager's fear of stigma when discussing mental health. Practical application: training staff to use affirming language. Challenge: avoiding inadvertent minimisation of concerns.

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) – A medical condition characterised by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol consumption. Related terms: dependence, withdrawal, harm reduction. Example: a patient presenting with tremors and cravings. Practical application: brief intervention and referral to specialist services. Challenge: overcoming denial and social stigma.

Alzheimer's Disease – A progressive neurodegenerative disorder causing memory loss, confusion, and personality changes. Related terms: dementia, cognitive decline, caregiver burden. Example: an elderly resident forgets recent conversations. Practical application: memory aids and structured routines. Challenge: balancing autonomy with safety.

Ambulatory Care – Health services provided on an outpatient basis without overnight hospital stay. Related terms: community health, day clinic, continuity of care. Example: a mental health nurse conducts home visits for medication monitoring. Practical application: coordinating multidisciplinary teams. Challenge: ensuring follow-up adherence.

Anger Management – Techniques aimed at recognising triggers and controlling aggressive responses. Related terms: impulse control, conflict resolution, emotional regulation. Example: a client uses deep-breathing to defuse workplace tension. Practical application: group workshops teaching coping skills. Challenge: resistance from individuals who view anger as justified.

Attachment Theory – A psychological model describing how early relationships influence later emotional bonds. Related terms: secure attachment, insecure attachment, caregiving style. Example: a child with anxious-avoidant behaviour forming relationships. Practical application: supporting caregivers to develop secure attachment patterns. Challenge: addressing entrenched maladaptive behaviours.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) – A range of neurodevelopmental conditions characterised by social communication difficulties and repetitive behaviours. Related terms: neurodiversity, sensory processing, support plan. Example: an adult with ASD experiences sensory overload in a busy clinic. Practical application: providing quiet spaces and visual schedules. Challenge: individual variability requiring personalised approaches.

Behavioural Activation – A therapeutic strategy that encourages engagement in rewarding activities to combat depression. Related terms: activity scheduling, mood monitoring, reinforcement. Example: a client with low mood is scheduled to attend a community art class. Practical application: planners and worksheets used by support workers. Challenge: motivating individuals with severe anhedonia.

Bereavement – The period of grief following the loss of a loved one. Related terms: mourning, grief counseling, complicated grief. Example: a family member struggles with insomnia after a parent's death. Practical application: offering bereavement groups and referral to counselling. Challenge: differentiating normal grief from depressive disorders.

Biopsychosocial Model – An integrated framework that considers biological, psychological, and social factors in health. Related terms: holistic care, multidisciplinary, determinants of health. Example: assessing a patient's depression while considering genetics, stress, and socioeconomic status. Practical application: care plans that involve doctors, therapists, and social workers. Challenge: coordinating across disciplines.

Boundaries (Professional) – Limits set to maintain a therapeutic relationship and protect both client and practitioner. Related terms: ethics, confidentiality, role clarity. Example: a support worker refrains from sharing personal contact details. Practical application: clear policies and training on boundary setting. Challenge: navigating cultural expectations that blur professional lines.

Burnout – A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. Related terms: compassion fatigue, occupational stress, self-care. Example: a care assistant feels detached from patients after months of high workload. Practical application: regular supervision and stress-reduction workshops. Challenge: organisational pressures that limit time for recovery.

Case Management – Coordination of services to meet an individual's health and social needs. Related terms: care coordination, referral pathways, outcome monitoring. Example: a case manager arranges therapy, housing, and medication for a client with schizophrenia. Practical application: electronic records tracking interventions. Challenge: fragmented services and limited resources.

CBT (Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy) – A structured, time-limited psychotherapy that modifies dysfunctional thoughts and behaviours. Related terms: thought restructuring, exposure therapy, homework assignments. Example: a client learns to challenge catastrophic thinking about social situations. Practical application: training staff to deliver brief CBT techniques. Challenge: ensuring fidelity to evidence-based protocols.

Chronic Stress – Persistent activation of the stress response, leading to health deterioration. Related terms: cortisol, allostatic load, stress management. Example: a caregiver experiences headaches and irritability over months. Practical application: teaching relaxation techniques and time-management skills. Challenge: addressing underlying systemic pressures.

Co-Production – Collaborative design of services with service users and professionals sharing decision-making. Related terms: participatory approach, empowerment, stakeholder engagement. Example: a mental health service invites patients to co-design a new support group. Practical application: workshops and feedback loops. Challenge: balancing professional expertise with lived experience.

Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) – Multidisciplinary groups delivering mental health care in community settings. Related terms: outreach, multidisciplinary, continuity of care. Example: a psychiatrist, nurse, and social worker jointly assess a client's needs at home. Practical application: joint case reviews and shared care plans. Challenge: resource constraints limiting home visits.

Compassion Fatigue – Emotional exhaustion from prolonged exposure to others' suffering. Related terms: secondary trauma, burnout, self-care. Example: a hospice volunteer feels numb after months of caring for terminally ill patients. Practical application: debriefing sessions and supervision. Challenge: stigma around seeking help among caring professionals.

Confidentiality – The ethical and legal duty to protect personal information. Related terms: data protection, privacy, consent. Example: a support worker does not disclose a client's mental health status without permission. Practical application: secure record-keeping and clear consent forms. Challenge: balancing confidentiality with safeguarding duties.

Continuity of Care – Ongoing, consistent provision of health services across settings and time. Related terms: care transitions, handover, long-term follow-up. Example: a patient's medication plan is transferred smoothly from hospital to community nurse. Practical application: standardized discharge summaries. Challenge: communication gaps between agencies.

Crises Intervention – Immediate, short-term assistance aimed at stabilising acute mental health emergencies. Related terms: safety planning, de-escalation, emergency response. Example: a client threatens self-harm and is offered a 24-hour crisis hotline. Practical application: rapid assessment protocols. Challenge: limited availability of crisis teams in rural areas.

Culture-Sensitive Practice – Adapting services to respect and respond to diverse cultural backgrounds. Related terms: cultural competence, equity, inclusion. Example: using culturally appropriate language when discussing mental health with a refugee family. Practical application: training on cultural norms and interpreter use. Challenge: avoiding stereotypes while acknowledging cultural influences.

Depression – A mood disorder marked by persistent sadness, loss of interest, and functional impairment. Related terms: major depressive disorder, dysthymia, mood disorder. Example: a client reports low energy and difficulty sleeping for weeks. Practical application: screening tools like PHQ-9 and referral to therapy. Challenge: stigma may prevent help-seeking.

Developmental Disabilities – Chronic conditions originating in childhood that affect physical, learning, or behavioural development. Related terms: intellectual disability, support needs, adaptive skills. Example: an adult with Down syndrome requires tailored mental health support. Practical application: using simple language and visual aids. Challenge: limited specialised services for co-occurring mental health issues.

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) – A psychotherapy combining cognitive-behavioural techniques with mindfulness, primarily for borderline personality disorder. Related terms: emotional regulation, distress tolerance, skills training. Example: a client learns to use “wise mind” to reduce self-harm urges. Practical application: group skills classes and individual coaching. Challenge: intensive commitment required from both client and service.

Discharge Planning – Process of preparing a patient for transition from inpatient to community care. Related terms: after-care, follow-up, relapse prevention. Example: arranging community therapy and medication review before a patient leaves the mental health ward. Practical application: multidisciplinary meetings and written discharge summaries. Challenge: ensuring continuity when community resources are scarce.

Discrimination (Mental Health) – Unfair treatment based on a person’s mental health status. Related terms: stigma, equality, rights. Example: an employer refuses to accommodate a worker’s anxiety disorder. Practical application: advocacy and legal support through equality bodies. Challenge: hidden biases that influence everyday interactions.

Dual Diagnosis – Co-occurrence of mental health disorder and substance misuse. Related terms: comorbidity, integrated treatment, relapse. Example: a client with schizophrenia also struggles with alcohol dependence. Practical application: coordinated care plans addressing both conditions. Challenge: fragmented services that treat each issue separately.

Early Intervention – Prompt identification and treatment of mental health problems to improve outcomes. Related terms: prevention, screening, rapid access. Example: a university health service offers a fast-track assessment for students reporting depressive symptoms. Practical application: walk-in clinics and online self-assessment tools. Challenge: limited funding for early-stage programmes.

Emotional Resilience – The ability to adapt to stress and recover from adversity. Related terms: coping skills, adaptability, psychological flexibility. Example: a caregiver maintains a positive outlook despite ongoing challenges. Practical application: resilience-building workshops focusing on problem-solving and optimism. Challenge: measuring resilience objectively.

Empathy – The capacity to understand and share another’s feelings. Related terms: active listening, compassion, therapeutic alliance. Example: a nurse mirrors a client’s anxiety by acknowledging their fear. Practical application: communication training emphasising reflective statements. Challenge: preventing emotional overload among staff.

Engagement (Therapeutic) – The process of establishing rapport and motivating participation in treatment. Related terms: alliance, motivation, trust. Example: a case worker uses motivational interviewing to explore a client’s goals. Practical application: goal-setting sheets and regular check-ins. Challenge: disengagement due to previous negative experiences.

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) – Clinical decision-making informed by the best available research, clinical expertise, and patient preferences. Related terms: guidelines, outcome measurement, best practice. Example: selecting a mindfulness-based programme proven to reduce anxiety. Practical application: regular

audit of interventions against current guidelines. Challenge: keeping up-to-date with rapidly evolving evidence.

Externalising Behaviours – Acting out problems through disruptive actions rather than verbal expression. Related terms: aggression, conduct issues, behavioural management. Example: a teenager throws objects during a therapy session. Practical application: de-escalation techniques and functional behaviour assessments. Challenge: underlying trauma may drive the behaviour.

Family Therapy – A therapeutic approach involving family members to improve communication and resolve conflicts. Related terms: systemic therapy, relational patterns, support network. Example: a therapist facilitates a session where parents and a teen discuss coping with depression. Practical application: scheduled family meetings with clear objectives. Challenge: aligning differing family goals and cultural expectations.

Feedback Informed Treatment (FIT) – Systematic collection of client feedback to tailor therapy. Related terms: outcome monitoring, client-reported measures, continuous improvement. Example: after each session a client rates their sense of progress, guiding future sessions. Practical application: brief questionnaires integrated into electronic records. Challenge: ensuring honest responses without fear of judgement.

Gender Dysphoria – Distress experienced due to incongruence between assigned sex at birth and gender identity. Related terms: transgender health, affirmation, hormone therapy. Example: a young adult seeks support to transition socially. Practical practice: referral to specialised gender clinics and supportive counselling. Challenge: navigating societal stigma and limited local resources.

Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD) – Persistent, excessive worry about a range of life events for six months or more. Related terms: worry, tension, avoidance. Example: a client constantly worries about health despite medical reassurance. Practical application: CBT techniques focusing on worry postponement and relaxation training. Challenge: differentiating GAD from normal everyday stress.

Guided Self-Help – Structured resources, often written, that individuals use with minimal professional support. Related terms: low-intensity intervention, psycho-education, workbook. Example: a client follows a CBT-based workbook for insomnia. Practical application: providing printed or online modules alongside brief check-ins. Challenge: adherence can be low without regular encouragement.

Health Promotion – Strategies aimed at improving health and preventing illness across populations. Related terms: public health, preventative care, lifestyle modification. Example: a community campaign encouraging regular physical activity to reduce depression risk. Practical application: flyers, workshops, and collaborative projects with local organisations. Challenge: reaching hard-to-engage groups.

Healing-Oriented Care – An approach that recognises trauma, fosters safety, and promotes empowerment. Related terms: trauma-informed, safety, empowerment. Example: a service redesigns waiting areas to reduce sensory overload for trauma survivors. Practical application: staff training on recognising triggers and offering choices. Challenge: integrating healing principles into fast-paced clinical settings.

Helplessness (Learned) – A state where individuals believe they cannot influence outcomes, often leading to depression. Related terms: attribution, self-efficacy, hopelessness. Example: a client stops trying to find work after repeated rejections. Practical application: goal-setting with small, achievable steps to rebuild confidence. Challenge: breaking entrenched negative belief patterns.

Hoarding Disorder – Persistent difficulty discarding possessions, leading to clutter that interferes with living spaces. Related terms: obsessive-compulsive spectrum, clutter, safety hazards. Example: an elderly client's home becomes unsafe due to accumulated items. Practical application: collaborative decluttering plans and occupational therapy support. Challenge: resistance to change and possible co-occurring anxiety.

Human Rights (Mental Health) – Legal entitlements protecting individuals from discrimination, involuntary treatment, and abuse. Related terms: advocacy, liberty, dignity. Example: a patient challenges an unlawful detention under mental health legislation. Practical application: informing clients of their rights and providing legal support. Challenge: navigating complex legislation while respecting autonomy.

Illness Perception – Individual beliefs about the cause, timeline, and controllability of an illness. Related terms: health belief model, attribution, coping. Example: a client believes depression is a personal weakness rather than a medical condition. Practical application: psycho-education to reframe misconceptions. Challenge: deeply held cultural or personal beliefs may resist change.

Impaired Insight – Limited awareness of one's mental health condition, affecting treatment adherence. Related terms: anosognosia, denial, capacity. Example: a person with schizophrenia does not recognise the need for medication. Practical application: motivational interviewing and family involvement to encourage acceptance. Challenge: balancing respect for autonomy with safety concerns.

Individualised Care Plan – A written document outlining a person's specific health goals, interventions, and responsibilities. Related terms: personalised care, action plan, outcome tracking. Example: a plan includes weekly therapy, medication review, and social activities for a client with bipolar disorder. Practical application: regular reviews and updates. Challenge: ensuring all team members have access and adhere to the plan.

Infant Mental Health – Focus on emotional and relational wellbeing of children from birth to three years. Related terms: attachment, early intervention, parent-infant interaction. Example: a home-visiting nurse observes insecure attachment signs. Practical application: offering parenting support groups and dyadic therapy. Challenge: early detection can be subtle and requires specialised training.

Integration (Service Integration) – Coordination of physical and mental health services to provide seamless care. Related terms: collaborative care, multidisciplinary, whole-person approach. Example: a primary care physician works with a mental health counsellor to manage a patient's chronic pain and depression. Practical application: shared electronic health records. Challenge: differing organisational cultures and funding streams.

Intervention Fidelity – The degree to which a programme is delivered as intended by its developers. Related terms: quality assurance, protocol adherence, training. Example: a therapist follows the exact steps of a CBT manual. Practical application: regular supervision and checklists. Challenge: adaptations for local contexts

may unintentionally dilute core components.

Internalising Behaviours – Emotional problems expressed inwardly, such as anxiety or depression. Related terms: self-harm, withdrawal, mood disorders. Example: a child becomes withdrawn and shows signs of anxiety after bullying. Practical application: school-based counselling and early screening. Challenge: these behaviours are less visible than externalising actions.

Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) – A time-limited therapy focusing on improving relationships and social functioning. Related terms: role transitions, grief, interpersonal disputes. Example: a client experiences depressive symptoms after a recent divorce. Practical application: structured sessions targeting communication patterns. Challenge: requires client willingness to discuss personal relationships.

Judgmental Attitude (Therapeutic) – A stance that evaluates or criticises the client, undermining trust. Related terms: stigma, bias, therapeutic alliance. Example: a practitioner dismisses a client's concerns as "just anxiety". Practical application: reflective practice and supervision to identify biases. Challenge: deeply ingrained societal stereotypes.

Key Worker Model – Assignment of a single professional as the main point of contact for a client's care. Related terms: case coordinator, continuity, liaison. Example: a mental health nurse acts as the key worker for a client with complex needs. Practical application: regular meetings and a single contact number. Challenge: workload may limit the ability to provide consistent support.

Kindling Theory – The hypothesis that repeated stressors lower the threshold for future mood episodes. Related terms: sensitisation, recurrence, mood disorder. Example: a person with recurrent depression finds each episode triggered more easily. Practical application: proactive relapse prevention strategies. Challenge: predicting and preventing subtle triggers.

Learning Disability – A condition affecting intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour, often requiring support. Related terms: intellectual disability, support plans, capacity. Example: a client with a learning disability experiences anxiety in unfamiliar environments. Practical application: using visual schedules and simplified language. Challenge: ensuring mental health assessments are appropriate and accessible.

Legal Capacity – The ability to understand information and make decisions about one's own care. Related terms: consent, mental capacity, autonomy. Example: assessing whether a client can consent to medication. Practical application: structured capacity assessments following statutory guidelines. Challenge: fluctuating capacity due to mental health fluctuations.

Link Worker – A professional who connects individuals with community resources and support services. Related terms: referral, social prescribing, navigation. Example: a link worker arranges a local art class for a client experiencing loneliness. Practical application: maintaining an up-to-date resource directory. Challenge: limited availability of suitable community options.

Listening Skills – Active techniques that demonstrate attention, understanding, and empathy. Related terms: reflective listening, paraphrasing, validation. Example: a support worker repeats back a client's concern to confirm understanding. Practical application: training modules with role-play exercises. Challenge: avoiding

the urge to give immediate advice.

Low-Intensity Intervention – Brief, often self-guided treatments for mild to moderate mental health problems. Related terms: guided self-help, stepped care, psycho-education. Example: an online CBT programme for mild anxiety. Practical application: offering these options before higher-intensity therapies. Challenge: ensuring appropriate triage to higher levels if needed.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) – A structured programme teaching mindfulness meditation to reduce stress. Related terms: meditation, present-moment awareness, relaxation. Example: a group meets weekly to practice breathing exercises. Practical application: integrating short mindfulness breaks into daily routines. Challenge: maintaining regular practice among participants.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) – A collaborative conversation style that strengthens personal motivation for change. Related terms: ambivalence, change talk, reflective listening. Example: a clinician explores a client's reasons for reducing alcohol use. Practical application: brief MI sessions incorporated into routine assessments. Challenge: requires skillful practice to avoid confrontational tone.

Multimorbidity – The coexistence of two or more chronic health conditions in one individual. Related terms: comorbidity, complex care, polypharmacy. Example: a patient with diabetes and depression struggles with medication adherence. Practical application: coordinated care plans that address both physical and mental health. Challenge: fragmented services often treat conditions separately.

Myth-Based Education – Teaching that addresses common misconceptions about mental health. Related terms: stigma reduction, awareness, psycho-education. Example: a leaflet debunks the myth that "mental illness is a sign of weakness". Practical application: workshops that encourage open discussion. Challenge: deep-seated myths may persist despite education.

National Health Service (NHS) Mental Health Act – Legislation governing the assessment, treatment, and rights of people with mental disorders. Related terms: detention, compulsory treatment, safeguards. Example: a patient is assessed under Section 3 for involuntary admission. Practical application: clinicians follow statutory procedures and document thoroughly. Challenge: balancing safety with respect for autonomy.

Neurodevelopmental Disorders – Conditions originating in brain development that affect cognition, behaviour, and social interaction. Related terms: autism, ADHD, intellectual disability. Example: a teenager with ADHD experiences heightened anxiety in academic settings. Practical application: tailored coping strategies and classroom accommodations. Challenge: overlapping symptoms can complicate diagnosis.

Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI) – Deliberate self-harm without intent to die, often to regulate emotions. Related terms: self-harm, coping, emotional regulation. Example: a client cuts their forearms during periods of intense distress. Practical application: safety planning and teaching alternative emotion-regulation techniques. Challenge: secrecy and shame may impede disclosure.

Normalization (Therapeutic) – Emphasising that emotional responses are common and understandable. Related terms: validation, destigmatization, reassurance. Example: a therapist tells a client that feeling

anxious before a public speaking event is normal. Practical application: using normalizing statements during counselling. Challenge: ensuring normalization does not minimise serious symptoms.

Observational Learning – Acquiring new behaviours by watching others, a principle of social learning theory. Related terms: modelling, imitation, vicarious reinforcement. Example: a client learns relaxation techniques by watching a therapist demonstrate them. Practical application: role-play and demonstration in group sessions. Challenge: ineffective if the model is not perceived as credible.

Occupational Therapy (OT) – A profession that helps individuals engage in meaningful activities despite physical or mental health limitations. Related terms: functional assessment, activity analysis, adaptation. Example: an OT designs a daily routine to reduce depressive rumination. Practical application: activity scheduling and skill-building exercises. Challenge: limited OT resources in some community settings.

Outcome Measures – Standardised tools used to assess the effectiveness of interventions. Related terms: scales, questionnaires, evaluation. Example: using the GAD-7 to monitor anxiety severity over time. Practical application: routine administration at intake and follow-up. Challenge: ensuring measures are culturally appropriate and not burdensome.

Parental Mental Health – The psychological wellbeing of parents, which influences child development. Related terms: family systems, intergenerational transmission, caregiver stress. Example: a mother's depression impacts her ability to respond to her infant's cues. Practical application: offering parental support groups and counseling. Challenge: stigma may prevent parents from seeking help.

Peer Support – Assistance provided by individuals with lived experience of mental illness to others in similar situations. Related terms: mutual aid, lived experience, empowerment. Example: a peer mentor shares coping strategies with a newly diagnosed client. Practical application: structured peer-led groups and one-to-one meetings. Challenge: maintaining boundaries and ensuring adequate training.

Person-Centred Planning – An approach that places the individual's preferences, strengths, and goals at the core of service design. Related terms: empowerment, self-direction, collaborative planning. Example: a client chooses to focus on employment support rather than further therapy. Practical application: using personal development plans. Challenge: aligning service capacity with individual wishes.

Pharmacotherapy – Use of medication to treat mental health conditions. Related terms: psychopharmacology, side effects, adherence. Example: prescribing an SSRI for moderate depression. Practical application: regular monitoring of response and side-effects. Challenge: medication non-adherence due to stigma or side-effect concerns.

Physical Activity (Mental Health) – Exercise recognised for its benefits on mood, anxiety, and cognition. Related terms: aerobic exercise, endorphins, lifestyle intervention. Example: a client joins a weekly walking group to alleviate depressive symptoms. Practical application: prescribing activity as part of a treatment plan. Challenge: motivational barriers and physical health limitations.

Positive Psychology – A field focusing on strengths, wellbeing, and flourishing rather than pathology. Related terms: resilience, gratitude, strengths-based. Example: a therapist uses a strengths-identification

exercise with a client. Practical application: goal-setting around personal values and strengths. Challenge: ensuring balance with addressing distressing symptoms.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – A disorder characterised by intrusive memories, avoidance, hyperarousal, and negative mood after trauma. Related terms: flashbacks, hypervigilance, trauma-focused therapy. Example: a veteran experiences nightmares after combat exposure. Practical application: trauma-focused CBT or EMDR. Challenge: high dropout rates and co-occurring substance misuse.

Practitioner Burnout – Occupational exhaustion experienced by health and social care workers due to chronic stress. Related terms: compassion fatigue, work-life balance, organisational support. Example: a mental health aide reports feeling emotionally numb. Practical application: regular supervision, workload review, and wellbeing programmes. Challenge: systemic staffing shortages that perpetuate overload.

Prevention (Primary) – Strategies aimed at reducing the incidence of mental health problems before they occur. Related terms: health promotion, risk reduction, education. Example: school programmes teaching emotional literacy to children. Practical application: curriculum integration and teacher training. Challenge: measuring long-term impact on incidence rates.

Problem-Solving Therapy (PST) – A brief, structured approach teaching systematic steps to resolve everyday problems. Related terms: coping skills, decision making, goal setting. Example: a client learns to break down a stressful situation into manageable steps. Practical application: worksheets guiding problem definition, generation of solutions, and evaluation. Challenge: client resistance to structured approaches.

Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD) – A legal document allowing individuals to state treatment preferences for future mental health crises. Related terms: autonomy, informed consent, advance planning. Example: a client specifies preferred medication and refusal of involuntary hospitalization. Practical application: assisting clients to complete PADs during stable periods. Challenge: ensuring directives are respected during emergencies.

Psychiatric Medication Side-Effects – Unintended physiological or psychological reactions to psychotropic drugs. Related terms: adverse reactions, tolerability, monitoring. Example: a patient experiences weight gain on antipsychotic medication. Practical application: discussing side-effect profiles and offering alternatives. Challenge: balancing therapeutic benefit with quality-of-life concerns.

Psychological First Aid (PFA) – Immediate emotional and practical support provided after a traumatic event. Related terms: crisis response, safety, active listening. Example: a responder offers comfort and information to a person after a road accident. Practical application: training frontline staff in PFA principles. Challenge: avoiding re-traumatization while providing support.

Psychosis – A severe mental state involving loss of contact with reality, often featuring hallucinations or delusions. Related terms: schizophrenia, psychotic episode, reality testing. Example: a client hears voices commenting on their actions. Practical application: antipsychotic medication combined with psycho-education. Challenge: stigma and potential for involuntary treatment.

Public Health Approach – Population-level strategies aimed at preventing mental illness and promoting

wellbeing. Related terms: surveillance, policy, health equity. Example: a city implements a suicide prevention campaign with media guidelines. Practical application: data collection, community partnerships, and policy advocacy. Challenge: aligning multiple stakeholders and securing funding.

Recovery Model – A framework that emphasises personal growth, hope, and self-determination beyond symptom reduction. Related terms: empowerment, peer support, lived experience. Example: a client defines recovery as being able to maintain a job despite ongoing symptoms. Practical application: goal-oriented plans focusing on strengths. Challenge: reconciling recovery language with clinical risk management.

Risk Assessment (Mental Health) – Systematic evaluation of potential harm to self or others. Related terms: safety planning, suicide risk, violence risk. Example: a clinician uses a standardized tool to gauge a client's suicidal ideation. Practical application: documented risk levels and action plans. Challenge: fluctuating risk levels require frequent reassessment.

Safety Planning – A collaborative, step-by-step strategy to manage crises and reduce self-harm risk. Related terms: coping cards, emergency contacts, crisis resources. Example: a client creates a list of coping strategies and contacts for a suicidal episode. Practical application: printed safety plans kept in accessible locations. Challenge: ensuring the plan is realistic and regularly updated.

Schizophrenia – A chronic psychotic disorder characterised by delusions, hallucinations, disorganized thinking, and functional decline. Related terms: psychosis, negative symptoms, antipsychotics. Example: a young adult experiences auditory hallucinations and social withdrawal. Practical application: medication management, psycho-education, and supported employment. Challenge: adherence issues and stigma.

Self-Care (Professional) – Activities undertaken by staff to maintain personal health and prevent burnout. Related terms: wellbeing, stress management, work-life balance. Example: a nurse schedules regular exercise and mindfulness practice. Practical application: organisational policies that allocate time for self-care. Challenge: high workloads that limit personal time.

Self-Efficacy – Belief in one's ability to execute actions required to achieve desired outcomes. Related terms: empowerment, confidence, mastery. Example: a client feels capable of managing anxiety after mastering breathing techniques. Practical application: setting incremental goals that build confidence. Challenge: low self-efficacy can impede engagement with treatment.

Social Determinants of Health (SDH) – Economic and social conditions influencing health status and access to care. Related terms: housing, income, education, discrimination. Example: a client's depression is exacerbated by unstable housing. Practical application: linking clients to housing support and benefits advice. Challenge: addressing systemic inequities beyond individual interventions.

Social Prescribing – Referral to non-clinical services to improve health and wellbeing. Related terms: community resources, link worker, holistic care. Example: a GP refers a patient with loneliness to a local gardening club. Practical application: maintaining a directory of community activities. Challenge: evaluating outcomes and ensuring service availability.

Stigma (Public) – Societal attitudes that devalue and discriminate against people with mental illness. Related

terms: prejudice, stereotype, discrimination. Example: a community believes people with depression are “weak”. Practical application: public awareness campaigns and education. Challenge: deep-rooted cultural beliefs that persist despite interventions.

Stigma (Self) – Internalised negative beliefs held by individuals about their own mental health condition. Related terms: shame, self-stigma, identity. Example: a client avoids seeking help because they feel “defective”. Practical application: empowerment workshops and peer support. Challenge: altering deeply held self-perceptions.

Stress-Inoculation Training (SIT) – A coping skills programme that prepares individuals to handle future stressors. Related terms: resilience, coping rehearsal, anxiety management. Example: a client practices relaxation techniques in anticipation of a stressful exam. Practical application: structured sessions teaching coping statements and problem-solving. Challenge: transfer of skills from training to real-life situations.

Suicide Prevention – Strategies aimed at reducing suicide risk and supporting those at risk. Related terms: safety planning, crisis helpline, means restriction. Example: a national hotline provides 24-hour support to callers expressing suicidal thoughts. Practical application: training staff to recognise warning signs and intervene. Challenge: ensuring timely access to emergency services.

Supportive Housing – Residential accommodation combined with on-site support services for individuals with mental health needs. Related terms: assisted living, recovery residence, tenancy support. Example: a client with chronic psychosis lives in a house with a support worker present. Practical application: lease agreements linked to care plans. Challenge: funding and maintaining quality standards.

Therapeutic Alliance – The collaborative, trust-based relationship between client and practitioner. Related terms: rapport, partnership, engagement. Example: a client feels comfortable