

# MRCPsych General Adult Module

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## Personality Disorders

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

## Aims and Objectives

- Aims
  - To give an overview of personality disorders
- Objectives:
  - By the end of the sessions, trainees should have:  
An understanding of personality disorders (aetiology, epidemiology, diagnostic criteria, classification, psychopathology, clinical presentation, assessment, course and prognosis) and their management (pharmacological, psychological, social).

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

## To achieve this

- Case Presentation
  - Journal Club
  - 555 Presentation
  - Expert-Led Session
  - MCQs
- 
- Please sign the register and complete the feedback

# **GA Module: Personality Disorders**

**Expert Led Session**

## **Personality Disorders: an overview**

# Contents

- What is personality?
- Models of personality
- What is a personality disorder?
- Classification
- Aetiological theories
- Epidemiology
- Course & Prognosis
- Assessment of personality disorders
- Management / Treatment
- References and Further reading
- MCQs

# What is 'personality'?

# What is 'personality'?

Health Education England

*From the Latin word 'persona', relating to a theatrical mask worn by performers to either project different roles or disguise their identities*

***'That which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation...'***

*–Raymond B Cattell, 1950*

***'The distinctive patterns of behaviour (thoughts, feelings, emotions, actions) that characterise each individual enduringly.'***

*– Walter Mischel, 1999*

***'A pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person's behaviour.'***

*– Feist and Feist 2009*

***'The ingrained patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour characterizing an individual's unique lifestyle and mode of adaptation, and resulting from constitutional factors, development and social experience.'***

*– World Health Organisation Lexicon of Psychiatric and Mental Health Terms*



# Models of Personality

- Various different models to explain personality have been developed:

## Categorical

*Eg ICD-10/DSM-V categories*

Disorders in personality are seen as discrete categories

## Experimental Approach

Looks for general laws and causal relationships between personality variables

## Correlational Approach

Assumes the structure of personality is common to all but varies in combinations of traits

## Psychoanalytic Approach

*Eg Sigmund Freud*

Assesses personality using the psychological principles of the superego, id, ego and defence mechanisms

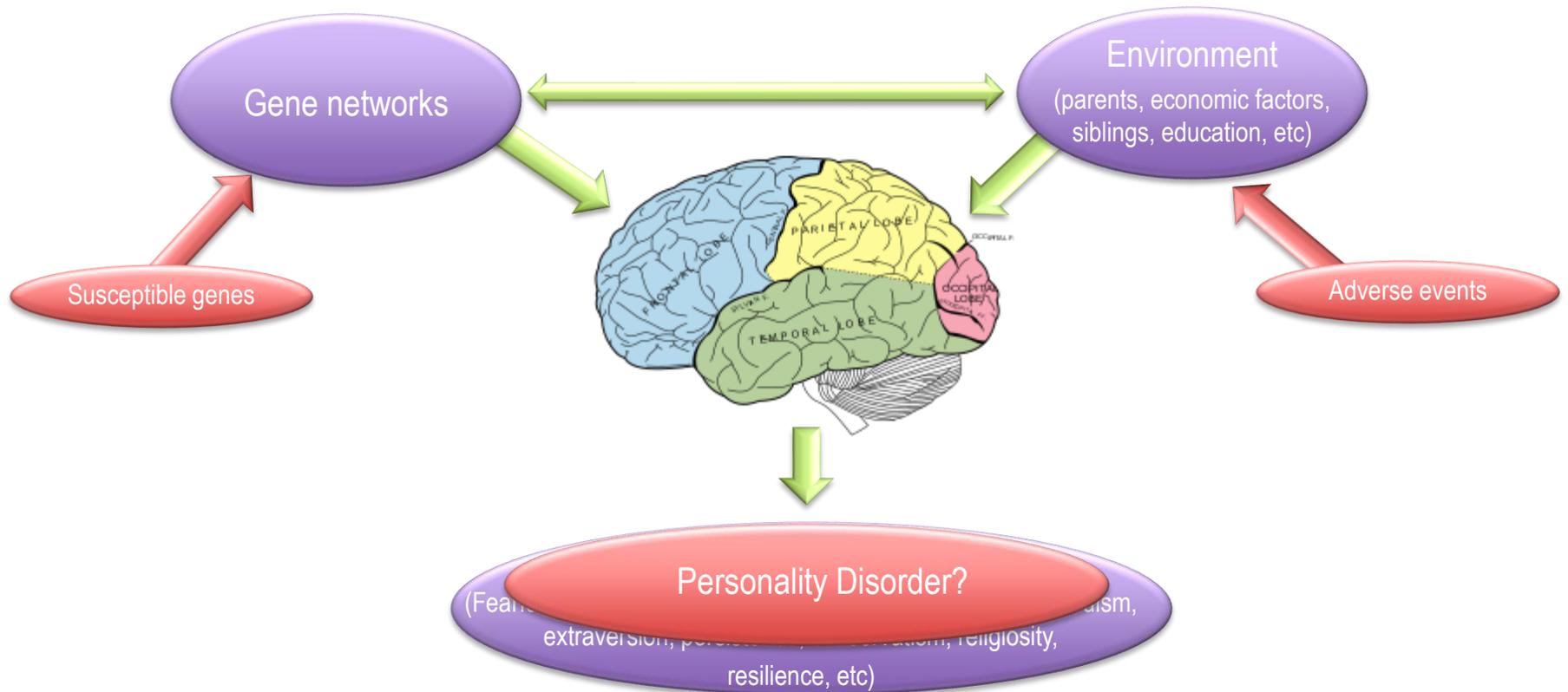
## Dimensional Models

*Eg Eysenck's theory, OCEAN*

Traits are distributed within dimensions, enabling classification of people by their personality type

# Genes, the Environment and Personality Health Education England

- Hamer (2002) argued for a complex interaction between genes and environment to produce personality traits:



# What is ‘personality disorder’?

# What is personality disorder

- When personality develops in such a way as to be harmful or distressing to themselves and/or others and interferes with daily functioning

## ICD10 Description

Deeply engrained and **enduring behavior patterns**, manifesting as **inflexible responses** to a broad range of **personal** and **social situations**.

They represent **extreme** or **significant deviations** from the way in which the average individual in a given culture **perceives, thinks, feels** and, particularly, **relates to others**.

Such behavior patterns tend to be stable and to **encompass multiple domains** of **behavior** and **psychological** functioning.

They are frequently, but not always associated with various degrees of **subjective distress** and **problems of social performance**.

They usually manifest since childhood or adolescence and continue throughout adulthood.

## DSM-V Description

The essential features are impairments in personality (**self** and **interpersonal**) functioning and the presence of **pathological personality traits**.

Significant impairments in **self** (identity or self-direction) and **interpersonal** (empathy or intimacy) functioning and one or more pathological personality trait domains or trait facets.

The impairments in personality functioning and the individual's trait expression are **relatively stable** across **time** and consistent across **situations**.

# Personality Disorder Classification *Health Education England*

There are differences in diagnoses between ICD and DSM:

| ICD-10                          |
|---------------------------------|
| F60.0 Paranoid                  |
| F60.1 Schizoid                  |
| F60.2 Dissocial                 |
| F60.3 Emotionally Unstable      |
| F60.4 Histrionic                |
| F60.5 Anankastic                |
| F60.6 Anxious (avoidant)        |
| F60.7 Dependent                 |
| F60.8 Other (inc. narcissistic) |

| DSM-V                |
|----------------------|
| Paranoid             |
| Schizoid             |
| Schizotypal          |
| Antisocial           |
| Borderline           |
| Histrionic           |
| Narcissistic         |
| Obsessive-Compulsive |
| Avoidant             |
| Dependent            |

**DSM-V**

Retains current diagnostic classification but also includes a radical shift in the appendix for further research into a hybrid methodology retaining six personality types but addressing degree of impairment in functioning.

**ICD-11**

Is mooted to follow a similar pattern using 6 domain traits with an additional specifier for severity of disorder

# Personality Disorder Clusters *Health Education England*

DSM-III grouped personality disorders into clusters:

## Cluster A

*Odd or Eccentric*

Paranoid

Schizoid

Schizotypal

## Cluster B

*Dramatic or Erratic*

Histrionic

Narcissistic

Borderline

Antisocial

## Cluster C

*Anxious*

Avoidant

Dependant

Obsessive-Compulsive

# Features of Cluster A PD

- Characterised by odd, eccentric beliefs and behaviours
- Have an unwillingness and inability to form and maintain close relationships
- Unusual perceptions are distinguishable from psychotic illness

## Paranoid PD

Irrational suspicion

Mistrustful

Jealous

Sensitive

Resentful

Bears grudges

Self-importance

Interpret motives as malevolent

## Schizoid PD

Emotionally detached

Apathy

Aloof

Lack of desire for close friendships

Preoccupation with fantasy

Introspective

## Schizotypal PD (DSM-V)

Extreme discomfort in interactions

Paranoid thoughts

Perceptual abnormalities

Strange beliefs or magical thinking

Inappropriate or constricted affect

Odd, eccentric, peculiar behaviour

# Features of Cluster B PD

- Characterised by dramatic, overly emotional or unpredictable behaviour
- Extreme difficulty in relating to others

## Dissocial PD

- Callous disregard for others
- Transient relationships
- Irresponsible
- Impulsive and irritable
- Lack of guilt and remorse
- Fail to accept responsibility
- Criminal and antisocial behaviour

## Histrionic PD

- Self-dramatization
- Shallow, labile affect
- Seeks attention and excitement
- Suggestibility
- Inappropriately seductive
- Exaggerated expression of emotions
- Self-indulgence

## Narcissistic PD (DSM-V)

- Grandiose sense of self-importance
- Fantasises about unlimited success
- Believes self to be special
- Requires excessive admiration
- Sense of entitlement from others
- Exploits others for own benefit
- Lack of empathy
- Envious of others

# Features of Cluster B PD

- Emotionally Unstable Personality Disorder is characterised by emotional lability, impulsivity and disturbance in interpersonal relationships

## EUPD Impulsive Type

Emotional lability

Explosive outbursts of emotion

Lack of impulse control

Liability to anger and violence

Quarrelsome

Difficulty maintaining course of action

Unstable, capricious mood

## EUPD PD Borderline Type

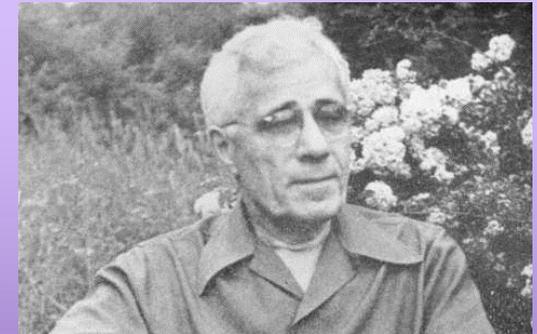
Disturbances in self-image

Chronic feelings of emptiness

Intense and unstable relationships

Tendency to self-destructive behaviour

Fear of abandonment



*'It is well known that a large group of patients fit frankly neither into the psychotic not into the psychoneurotic group, and that this **borderline** group of patients is extremely difficult to handle effectively by any psychotherapeutic method'*

--Adolph Stern, 1938

## Features of Cluster C PD

- Characterised by high levels of anxiety and fear
- Often have a significant desire for relationships but struggle to manage them appropriately

### Anankastic PD

Inhibited by perfectionism

Excessive conscientiousness

Preoccupation with details

Stubbornness and rigidity

Expects others to conform to their view

Unwelcome thoughts

Feelings of doubt

### Anxious (Avoidant) PD

Feelings of tension and apprehension

Feel insecure and inferior

Yearning to be accepted

Hypersensitivity to rejection/criticism

Restricted personal attachment

Excessively fearful of potential danger

Avoids social activity due to fear

### Dependent PD

Passive reliance on others

Fear of abandonment

Feel helpless and incompetent

Passive compliance with others wishes

Transfer responsibility to others

Relies on others for decision-making

Unwilling to make reasonable demands

# Aetiology

- Cluster A Personality Disorders:

## Biological

Modestly heritable (21-28%)

Schizotypal displays the **most genetic influence**

Familial association between schizotypal and schizophrenia

Reduced cortical **dopamine** → poor conceptual organisation → suspiciousness and distorted perception

## Environmental

Environmental factors more important

Deficits in early developmental stages lead to **mistrust** and **lack of confidence**

**Poor protective care** and **affective support** leads to paranoid features

# Aetiology

- EUPD:

## Biological

Familial factors: parents have high incidence of mood disorders; family history of ASPD/alcoholism

**HPA axis dysfunction** – leading to increased sensitivity of the amygdala

**Abnormal limbic emotional reactivity** (insufficient regulation from cingulate and prefrontal areas)

**Reduced serotonin metabolite** (5-hydroxyindole-acetic acid) in CSF, **blunted prolactin response** to serotonin agonists – thought to be associated with **impulsive aggression**

## Environmental

**Childhood trauma** may play crucial role (up to 45% have history of CSA)

**Attachment difficulties** in early life → Deficiencies in **self identity**

Poor regulation and modelling of behaviour from others leads to use of **maladaptive coping strategies**

Maladaptive traits evoke **negative response** from environment and **disrupt healthy social development**

# Aetiology

- Dissocial PD:

## Biological

Genetic factors strongly contribute

**Reduced serotonergic activity** in the brain thought to lead to **aggression**

**Impulsive ADHD** is a strong predictor for development of dissocial PD in later life

**25% of girls** and **40% of boys** with **conduct disorder** will develop dissocial PD

## Environmental

Parental deprivation, inconsistent maternal care, family violence, severe childhood physical abuse – **strong predictors**

Social disintegration and chronic criminality reflect a **normal adaptation** to **abnormal social environment**

# Aetiology

- Cluster C Personality Disorders:

## Biological

Biological mechanisms of anxiety disorders/social phobias have a role in **avoidant PD**

**Hypersensitivity** of brain areas involved in **separation anxiety** response

**Overactivity** of serotonergic **limbic** neuronal circuits

## Environmental

Criticism / rejection / relentless control by parents → reduced social esteem → social avoidance (*Avoidant PD*)

Control from parents and restriction of autonomy → belief one is helpless → dependency on others (*Dependent PD*)

Parental over-control and strong discipline → guilt if fails to achieve perfection → OCD behaviours (*Anankastic PD*)

# Epidemiology

- Personality disorders are common

**4.4%**

Prevalence in UK households

**~50%**

Prevalence in secondary care  
mental health services

**60-80%**

Prevalence in prison population

**M > F**

For all disorders except schizotypal  
in household survey

**17-18 years**

Shorter life span for those with PD,  
not explained by lifestyle/suicide

**24-28%**

Primary Care attendees

**Cluster B + psychotic,  
affective, anxiety  
disorders**

Strong associations

**Cluster C + affective  
disorders, anxiety  
disorders**

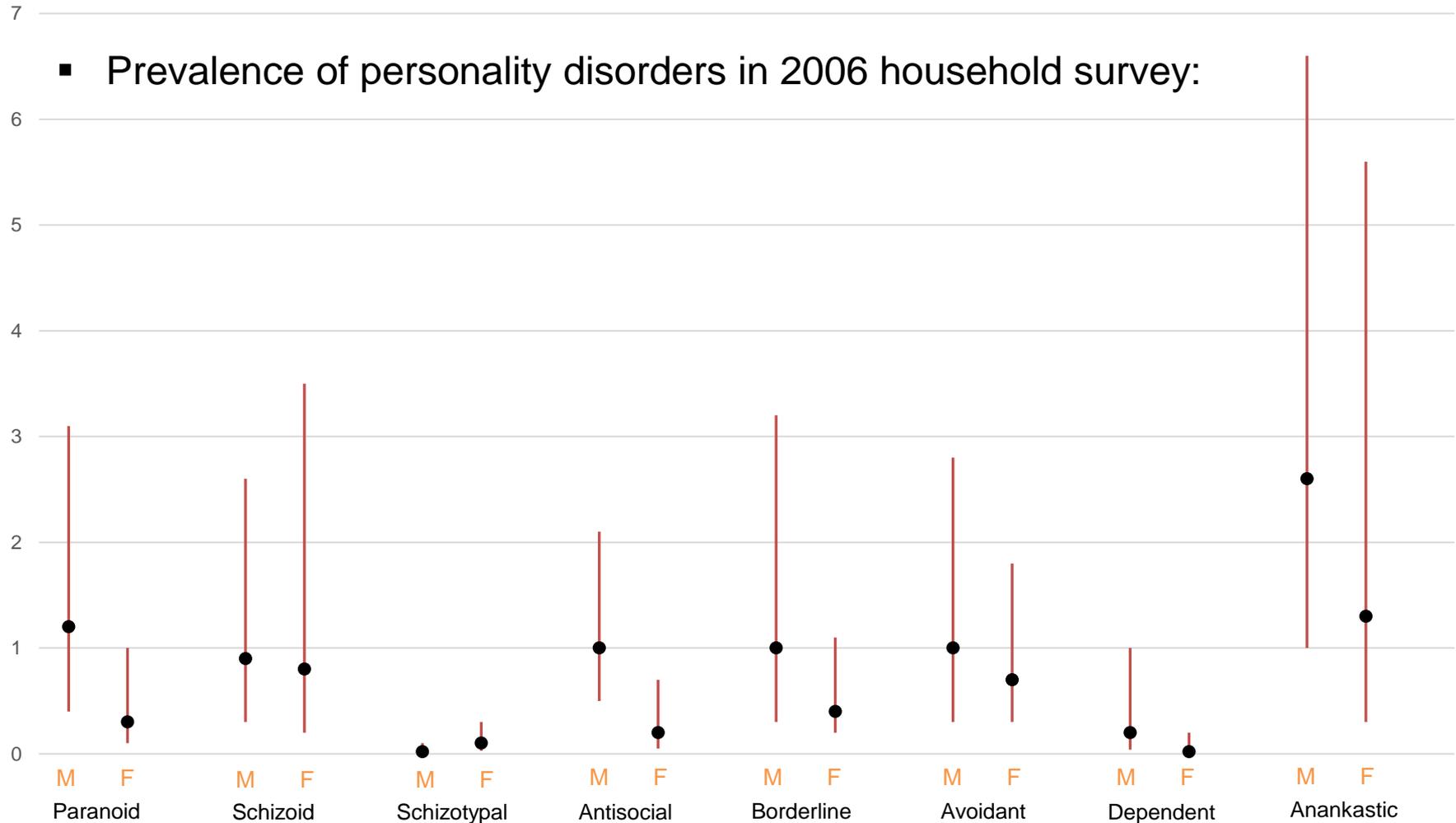
Strong associations

**Separated, unemployed,  
low social class, living  
in urban areas**

Increased prevalence

# Epidemiology

- Prevalence of personality disorders in 2006 household survey:



# Epidemiology

- Suicide and self-harm are highly prevalent in PD populations
- In EUPD:

**50-80%**

Engage in deliberate self-harm

**41%**

Have >50 acts of deliberate self-harm

**5-10%**

Will die by suicide

- Risks are significantly increased by comorbid MH diagnosis
- In patients who present with DSH to A+E:

**45.9%**

Diagnosed with personality disorder

**44.1%**

Diagnosed with personality disorder and MH comorbidity

# Course & Prognosis

- Personality disorders have been considered as life-long conditions
- However, evidence is emerging that their outcome is more positive
- Remission over a ten year period is common
- EUPD patients lag behind other PDs in terms of remission and recovery

## Remission

No longer meet diagnostic criteria

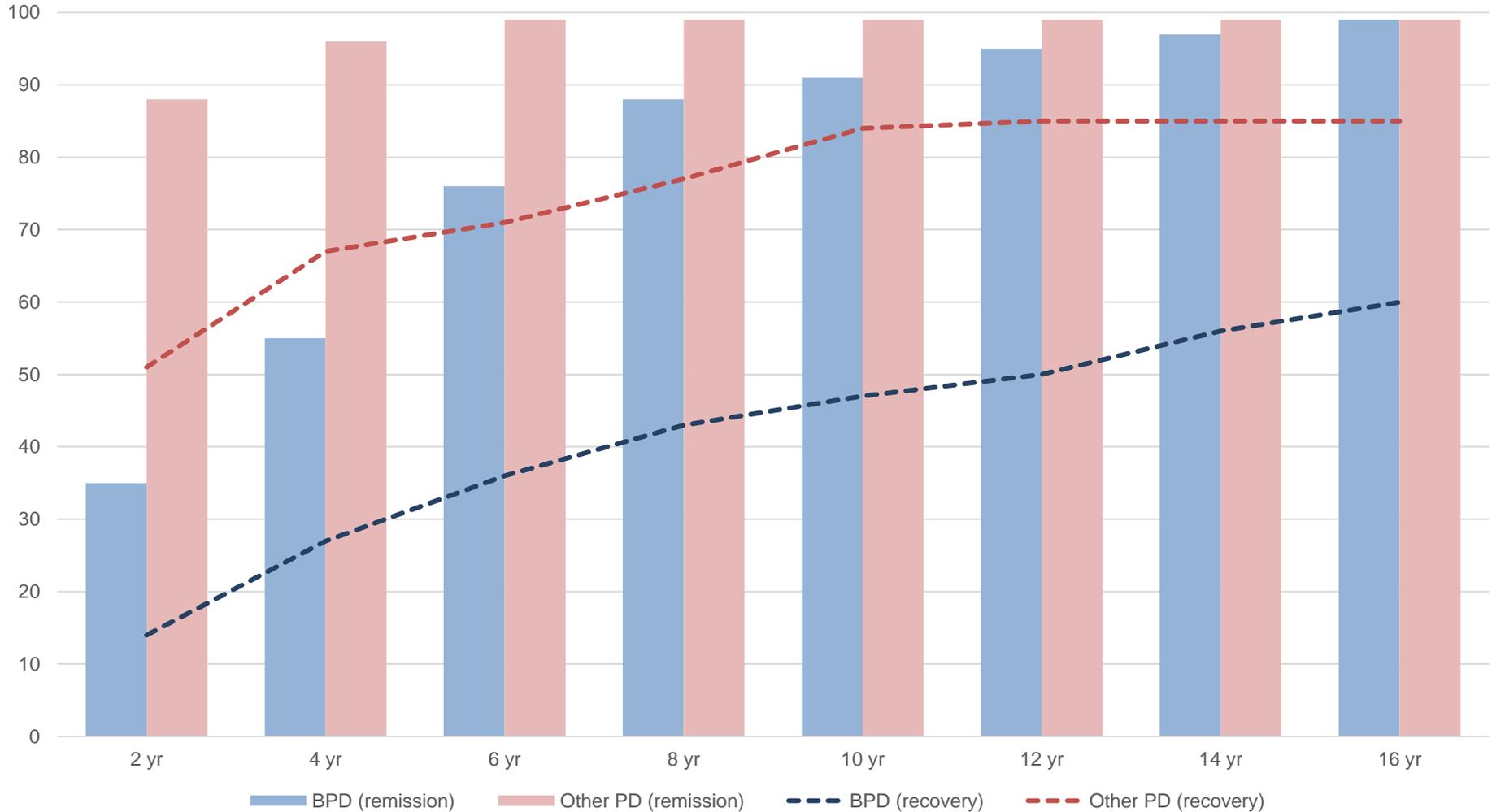
## Recovery

Symptomatic, vocational and social wellness

- Once a patient has met criteria for remission, a substantial and sustained recurrence of symptoms is rare
- In EUPD patients, some symptoms are more chronic, and improve in order:



# Course & Prognosis



## **Assessment of personality disorder**

- Thorough history including developmental history, social history, personal history and thorough risk assessment are vital
- In order to diagnose PD it is important to gather premorbid personality history
- Comorbid mental disorder may cloud the overall picture
- Collateral history from someone who knew the patient well is vital
- It is important to identify comorbid mental illness
- It is important to consider to what extent personality difficulties have impacted patient's sense of self, relationships with others, daily functioning

# Assessment Tools

- A variety of structured assessment tools are available for PD diagnosis:

## Personality Assessment Schedule (PAS)

Semi-structured interview with informant

ICD-10 + DSM-IV criteria

24 questions

## International Personality Disorder Examination (IPDE)

Semi-structured interview with patients

ICD-10 + DSM-IV criteria

537 questions

## Structured Clinical Interview for PD (SCID-II)

Semi-structured interview with patients

DSM-IV criteria

303 questions

## Zanarini Rating Scale for Borderline PD

Semi-structured interview with patients

DSM-IV criteria

9 questions

# Management of EUPD

# Psychological Treatment

\*Covered in detail in psychotherapy module

There is evidence that various modalities of psychological therapy help core and associated general psychopathology:

- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy
- Mentalization Based Therapy
- Transference Focussed Therapy
- Schema Focussed Therapy
- Systems Training for Emotional Predictability
- Problem Solving for Borderline Personality Disorder (STEPPS)

There is little robust evidence supporting one therapy over another

## NICE CG78:

Do not use **brief psychological interventions** (of less than 3 months' duration).

For **women**... for whom **reducing recurrent self-harm** is a priority, consider a comprehensive **dialectical behavior therapy** programme.

# Psychological Treatment

\*Covered in detail in psychotherapy module

Health Education England

- Psychosocial treatment is recommended as the primary treatment for personality disorders including EUPD.
- NICE suggest a mixture of group and individual therapies integrated with other services (social care, employment support, substance misuse services).

# Psychological Treatment

\*Covered in detail in psychotherapy module

Health Education England

There are five common characteristics of evidence-based psychological treatments for EUPD:

**Structured approaches** to prototypic EUPD problems

Patients encouraged to **assume control** themselves (sense of agency)

Therapists help connections of **feelings** to **events** and **actions**

Therapists are **active, responsive** and **validating**

Therapists **discuss** cases and **personal reactions** with others

# Pharmacological Treatment

- NICE does not recommend any specific drug intervention for treatment of EUPD
- Sedatives (eg antihistamine) may be used in crisis
- Prescriptions should be short-term time-limited
- Medication should be used to treat comorbidities only

**However...**

## **NICE CG78:**

Drug treatment should not be used specifically for borderline personality disorder or for the individual symptoms or behavior associated with the disorder.

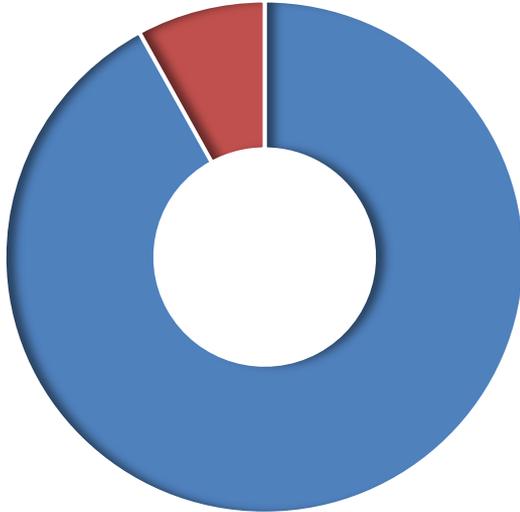
Antipsychotic drugs should not be used for the medium- and long-term treatment of borderline PD.

Drug treatment may be considered in the overall treatment of comorbid conditions.

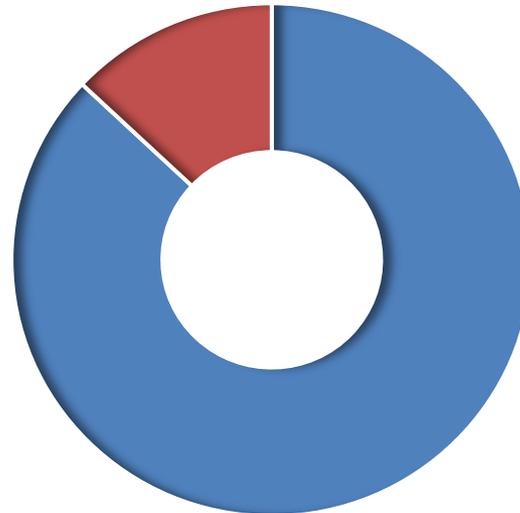
Short term sedative medication may be considered in a crisis

# Pharmacological Treatment

Health Education England



92% of EUPD patients are prescribed psychotropics



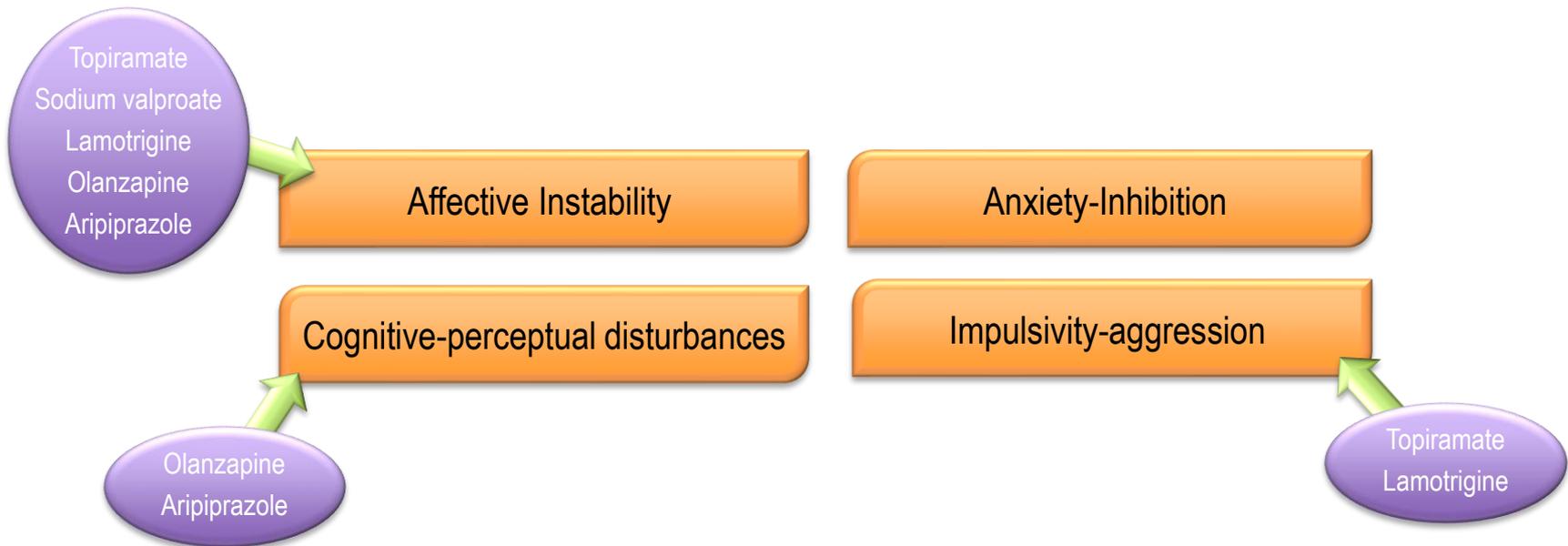
87% of people with a sole diagnosis of EUPD are prescribed psychotropics



Where EUPD is the sole diagnosis:  
 13% - no medication  
 21% - 1 medication  
 28% - 2 medications  
 23% - 3 medications  
 16% - 4 medications

# Pharmacological Treatment

- Some researchers argue for treatment of individual behaviour dimensions common to all personality disorders rather than treat the disorder itself:

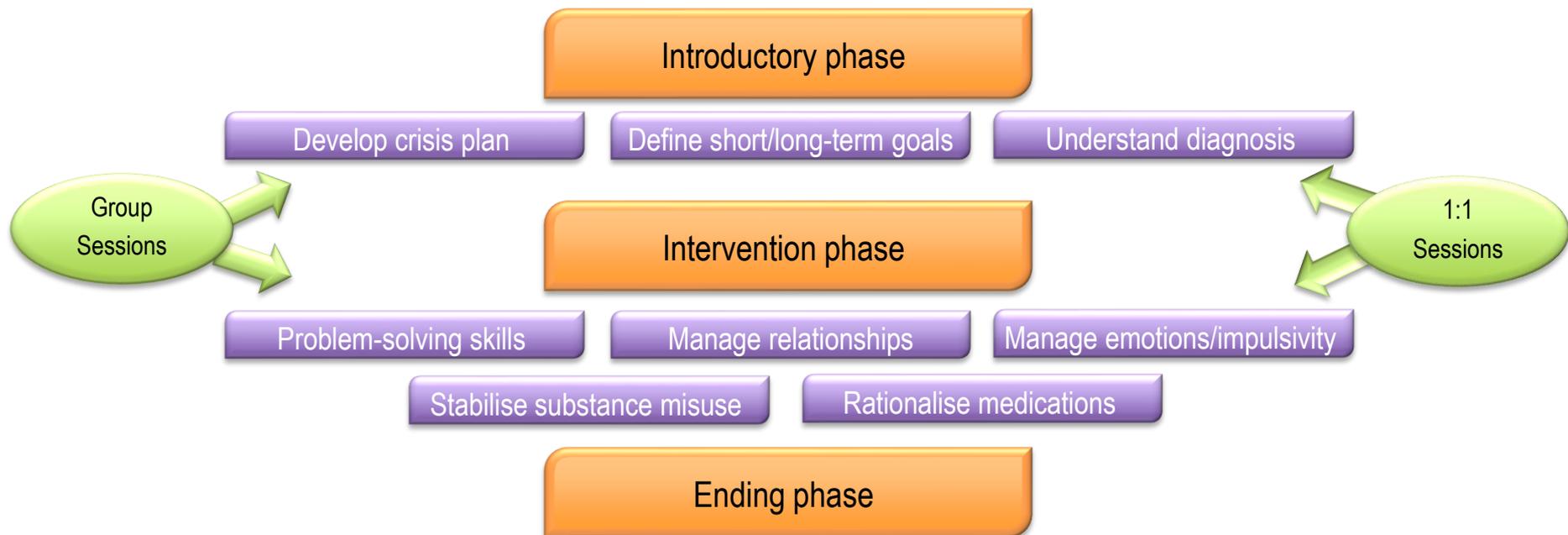


- A 2010 Cochrane review supported treatment of specific dimensions
- There is no evidence for drug treatment of chronic emptiness, feelings of abandonment or identity disturbance
- There is no evidence that SSRIs are beneficial in treatment of EUPD

# Structured Clinical Management

Health Education England

- Originally devised as a control for psychotherapy interventions for PD studies
- Essentially, the core elements of 'good psychiatric care' have positive impact in patients with EUPD



## Treatment of Dissocial PD

- There is insufficient evidence for psychological interventions
- MBT, DBT and Democratic Therapeutic Community can be offered
- Major improvements only related to substance misuse outcomes
- No studies have demonstrated improvements in antisocial behaviour
- There is insufficient evidence of pharmacological interventions

## Democratic Therapeutic Community

- DBT has been offered to those with Dissocial PD and EUPD
- Integrates a range of psychological approaches
- Enables members to re-experience and re-enact relationship difficulties
- Data is conflicting and comes from meta-analyses of poor-quality studies
- However, DCT continues to be offered in many different forms in the UK
- It is not specifically recommended by NICE

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

Any Questions?

Thank you

# References & Further Reading

## Diagnosis and epidemiology:

- American Psychiatric Association (2013) **Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5TH ed.)** Washington, DC.
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## References & Further Reading

### Aetiology:

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### Treatment:

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## MCQ

1. Which of the following is NOT a personality disorder in ICD-10?
  - A. Schizoid personality
  - B. Paranoid personality
  - C. Emotionally unstable personality
  - D. Schizotypal personality
  - E. Anankastic personality

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

## MCQ

2. What is the estimated prevalence of personality disorders in the prison population?

- A. 5-20%
- B. 20-40%
- C. 40-60%
- D. 60-80%
- E. 80-95%

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

## MCQ

3. A 36 year old man is visited at home by his GP. There is very little furniture, no television, no ornaments or pictures on the wall. He is indifferent to these observations, stating he has no need of those things. He has limited contact with his family and does not have any friends. He is clear he does not feel lonely or depressed. Which of the following personality disorders could he have?
- A. Histrionic
  - B. Antisocial
  - C. Paranoid
  - D. Schizotypal
  - E. Schizoid

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

## MCQ

4. Which of the following is recommended in the management of emotionally unstable personality disorder?

- A. Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors
- B. Minimum inpatient stay of one month
- C. Eye movement desensitisation and reprogramming
- D. Structured clinical management
- E. Polypharmacy

# GA Module: Personality Disorders

Any Questions?

Thank you.