



Defeat Depression

News update 1

The 'Defeat Depression Campaign' was launched in January 1992 by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in association with the Royal College of General Practitioners. This is a five year national campaign designed to assist general practitioners and other health care professionals in the recognition and treatment of depressive illness and to increase public awareness of the extent and treatability of depression. The specific objectives are:

To reduce the stigma associated with depression

For doctors and other health care professionals

- to publish agreed consensus statements on the recognition and treatment of depressive disorders in general practice
- to increase the knowledge of general practitioners and other health care professionals in the recognition and effective treatment of depressive illness
- to explore the potential for prevention of depressive illness through earlier recognition of symptoms
- to ensure that treatment is maintained for as long as necessary
- to measure the effectiveness of the professional education campaign.

For the public

- to enhance public awareness of the nature, course and treatment of depressive disorders
- to encourage people to seek help more readily from primary care and mental health services
- to make those at particular risk more aware of the existence of depressive illness and its responsiveness to treatment

to measure the effectiveness of the public education campaign.

The Campaign is administered by a Management Committee (chaired by Professor R. G. Priest) and a Scientific Advisory Committee (chaired by Professor E. S. Paykel). The membership of both Committees includes representatives from the Royal College of Psychiatrists and Royal College of General Practitioners (including Dr A. Donald, Deputy President). The British Association of Social Workers, the Manic Depression Fellowship and a Mental Health Facilitator are also represented on the Management Committee. The British Psychological Society has been invited to join.

1992 is being devoted to developing educational initiatives aimed at general practitioners and other health care professionals. These initiatives will continue to be promoted throughout the campaign and their effectiveness audited. To date, the Management Committee has received funding for the following initiatives:

Management Guidelines on the Diagnosis and Management of Depression based on two consensus statements prepared by representatives of The Royal College of Psychiatrists and The Royal College of General Practitioners and other medical practitioners with expertise in depressive illness. The production of these guidelines has been funded, and will be distributed, by the Department of Health.

An education package designed to train experienced doctors in counselling skills.

A training package on detection and counselling skills to aid diagnosis of depression. This is being developed for general practice course organisers and will be targeted at general practice trainees.

An audio-tape for general practitioners to give or lend to patients. This tape will include self-help information and advice.

A 'House Call' tape for general practitioners containing practical information and advice on the diagnosis and recognition of depression.

Two separate training packages for counsellors and practice nurses and health visitors in the use of the principles of cognitive therapy.

It is anticipated that the majority of these educational and training packages will be launched before the end of the year.

The Public Campaign will be launched in 1993.

For further information contact Deborah Hart at The Royal College of Psychiatrists.