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Eating Disorders: A professional patient's experience

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DISCLAIMER

In this talk I will be discussing not only the general issues faced by young people in recovery from Eating Disorders but also my own experiences. If you or a loved one struggles with a similar condition you may find some aspects triggering. Please feel free to leave if you feel affected or speak to me after the presentation.

Your health matters.

MY BACKGROUND

- Born premature, underweight with complex health needs, always a fussy eater
- Anorexia developed aged 13
- Treatment on and off for the last 12 years
- Small phases of recovery
- “SEED” – I’d rather be a flower
- 13 years experience moderating online mental health communities
- Strong focus on CYP and digital mental health
- Work with YoungMinds, DoH, NHS, RCPsych, Buddy, YouthNet, CLASP
- NOT RECOVERED

MY JOURNEY THROUGH TREATMENT

- ✘ CAMHS (1) - Hertfordshire
- ✘ AMHS (1) – London
- ✘ AMHS (2) – Essex
- ✘ AMHS (3) - Hertfordshire



SPECIFIC ISSUES FACED BY ED PATIENTS

- ✘ “Not sick enough”/playing chicken with health
- ✘ Waiting times
- ✘ Specific stigma around EDs perpetuated by diagnostic standards and media
- ✘ Lack of understanding in wider health community
- ✘ Over focus on weight, BMI and physical symptoms ruling many people out of treatment

#ENDTHEWAIT

<https://youtu.be/4WakHBU8Ez8?list=UUYMJikwqNIg7hYFU5UQ3Nbg>

CONSEQUENCES OF DELAYED TREATMENT

MIND “We still need to talk report” (2014) found that for those waiting for talking therapies:

- ✘ 67% became more mentally unwell
- ✘ 40% engaged in self harm
- ✘ 1 in 6 attempted suicide

For Eating Disorders it can mean serious physical and mental deterioration which flies in the face of all the evidence we have on prevention and early intervention

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE WANT

- ✘ Fast, easy, non stigmatised access to support including self referral
- ✘ Training for teachers and other staff CYP interact with on picking up early warning signs and supporting pupils
- ✘ Access to online, semi or anonymised services
- ✘ Shorter waiting times
- ✘ To be taken seriously by clinicians
- ✘ To be able to access a range of treatment & have choice (NHS Constitution)

THANK YOU

If you would like to speak with me or book me for speaking events and training sessions please don't hesitate to contact me

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