

Guidance for Community Agencies: Recognising Those at Risk of Psychosis

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Research has shown that people who develop psychosis experience a variety of difficulties prior to the onset of their first episode of psychosis and that this may occur as a gradual process where a person experiences difficulties and finds it difficult to cope over a period of time. It is often during this time that people are actively help seeking but without clear-cut signs of psychosis. Such individuals have been described to be at high-risk of developing psychosis or to have an 'At-Risk Mental State' (ARMS). However, despite this there are likely to be tell tale signs and symptoms which can be identified if someone is at risk of developing psychosis in the near future.

Important questions to ask:

- *Has the person felt that something odd might be going on that they cannot explain?*
- *Have they been feeling, seeing or hearing things that others cant?*
- *Have they felt that everyday things have a special meaning just for them?*
- *Have they been feeling that people are watching them or giving them a bad time for no apparent reason?*

What to do

If someone is experiencing any of these things then it may be helpful to ask for some advice from your GP or local specialist services.