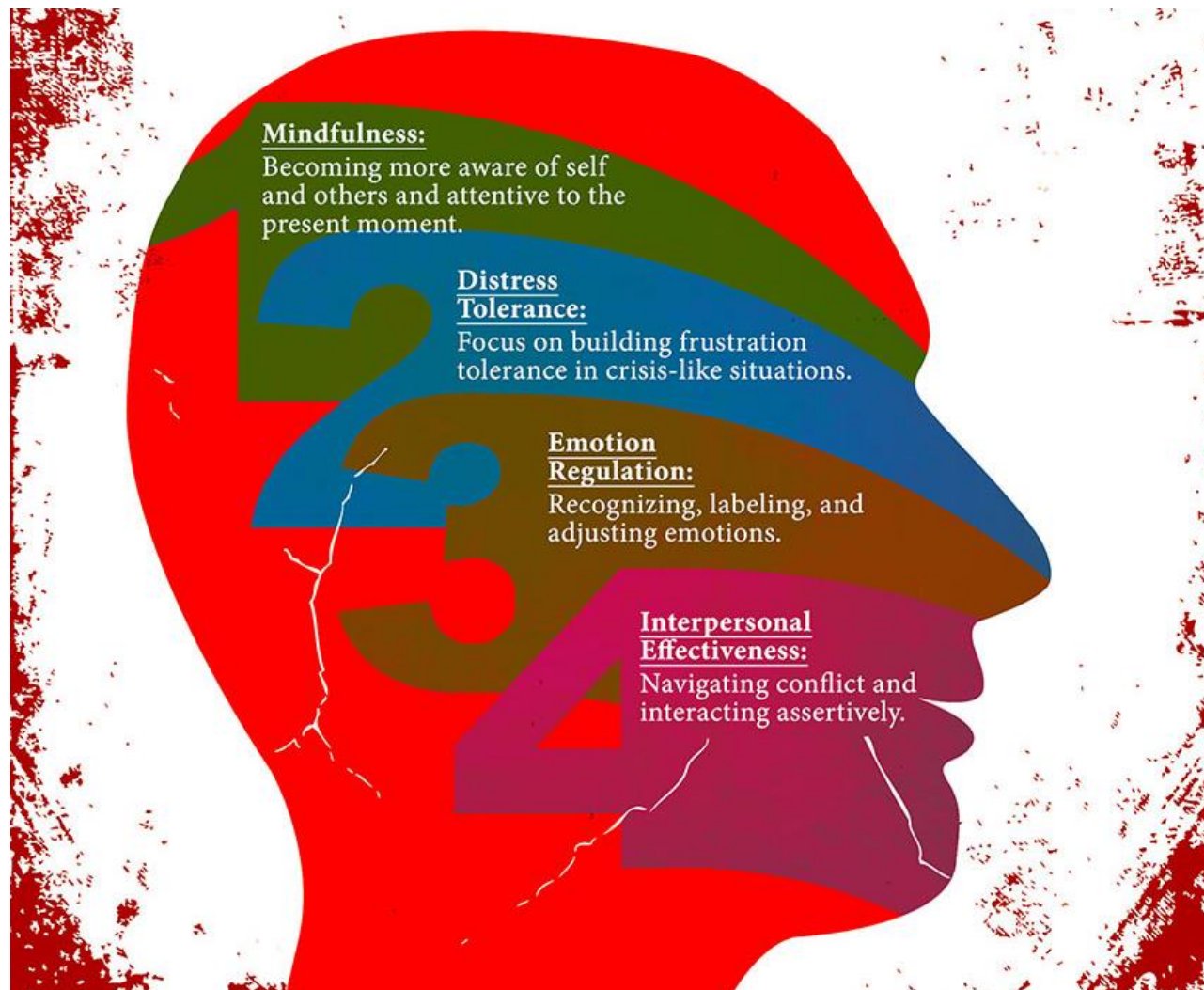


## A THERAPY TO HELP YOU HAVE A GOOD LIFE



*Roving Reporters Ryan, George, Jamie Lee & Jonathan from Sixmile Patients Council interview the DBT Therapy Team*

### Dialectical Behaviour Therapy in Muckamore Abbey Hospital

The word dialectics describes the mind's way of understanding concepts by appreciating their polar opposites. For example, what would light mean without darkness?

Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) treatment is a cognitive-behavioural approach that emphasizes the psychosocial aspects of treatment. The theory behind the approach is that some people are prone to react in a more intense and out-of-the-ordinary manner toward certain emotional situations, primarily those found in romantic, family and friend relationships. DBT theory suggests that some people's reaction in such situations can increase far more quickly than the average person's, have a higher level of emotional reaction, and take a longer amount of time to return to their usual levels.

Garvin Mcknight explains that DBT involves a skills group where people can learn about emotions and how to manage those emotions in a positive way. It uses one-to-one therapy to see if, and how, people are actually putting the skills they are learning into practice when they are not in the group. At Muckamore, staff who learn about DBT can help the patients on the ward learn to use these skills in every day situations. They can also notice when they are using those skills and encourage the patients to keep using and developing them.

The therapy runs over a twenty-week period and is broken into modules. The DBT team explains these modules:

**Mindfulness**, which teaches us to live in the here and now; in the moment. It helps people to focus on this moment in time and appreciate its importance, not letting worries distract us.

**Managing Feelings**, which targets people who find it difficult to manage the stress in their life. We sometimes have to accept that things in our life are hard and though they won't always get easier, we can learn new skills so that we manage how we deal with them more effectively.

**Coping in Crisis** looks at how to give people the skills to cope with a crisis that is affecting their lives. There are a range of skills, from going for a walk to having a 'self-sooth' box that helps to calm your senses. This box may include, for example, a cherished photograph or particular music that soothes you.

The DBT team monitor and evaluate using checklists to look at the way people think and deal with situations. This is done before and after the DBT therapy and we can see that there has been quite a lot of improvement to how people see and deal with difficult issues. It has been shown that overall behaviours during the week are being managed better, which has seen a reduction in medication as patients are using the skills they have learned from DBT. This seems to be transferring into the community as some of our colleagues in the community trust have found evidence that people who have DBT therapy have to spend less time attending the hospital, which is a positive step forward.

Hospital staff on the wards see that DBT can be used on a day-to-day basis, which gives staff the tools to use when they see patients getting very distressed. It can give staff a starting point to help patients improve their behaviour and control their emotions.

Finally, we interviewed a patient, JC, who had been through the therapy during his stay in hospital. JC was proud that he had spoken at a conference about DBT and explained how it helped him in his life and how it is giving him a great deal of confidence now that he is helping the team and other patients with the therapy. JC said, "DBT helps to encourage better behaviours and teaches you to behave appropriately, and it taught me better thinking, and wiser thinking".

*Thank  
You*

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK GARVÍN AND THE REST OF THE DBT TEAM  
AND HOPE YOU ENJOYED OUR STORY AND IT HELPED YOU TO  
UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT DBT

