

Getting help for an eating disorder: checklist

Choosing the right practitioner or service

An important part of the recovery process is working with a practitioner who is right for you. You should feel comfortable with their level of expertise and experience in dealing with eating disorders, and the treatments which they provide.

Things to consider when choosing a practitioner

- ✔ They are courteous, respectful and honest in all interactions.
- ✔ They display sensitivity and respect for your values, beliefs and culture.
- ✔ They accept that recovery outcomes are personal and unique for each individual.
- ✔ They recognise that recovery is about having the opportunity to explore and challenge your current perspective about your eating disorder, to help you to make choices to live a more meaningful, satisfying and purposeful life.
- ✔ They acknowledge that each individual is an expert on their own life and that recovery involves working in partnership with individuals and their carers to provide support in a way that makes sense to them.

When you are in therapy

- ✔ The practitioner empowers you so that you recognise that you are at the centre of the care that you receive, and supports you to make your own choices.
- ✔ Therapy is a safe place to connect with someone who understands your eating disorder.
- ✔ The practitioner listens to you and is willing to learn from your unique experiences, acting upon what you share with them and appreciating how these are important to you.
- ✔ They work with you in a positive and realistic way to help you realise your hopes, goals, and aspirations.
- ✔ The practitioner continuously evaluates your recovery so you can track your progress.
- ✔ Therapy inspires new hope for recovery.

If things aren't working out, or if you are not happy with the progress you are making, it is important that you discuss your concerns with your practitioner. Remember this is your journey, and it needs to make sense to you.

Your rights

When you visit a health practitioner, there are certain things that you have a right to expect. These include:

- ✔ Seeing a qualified health practitioner who will explain the services that you will receive.
- ✔ Being treated with dignity and respect.
- ✔ Receiving a competent and professional service.
- ✔ Your health and personal details to be kept confidential. In some cases, the law makes the health practitioner tell your information to another person or authority. If you are worried about how much you should tell your practitioner, ask what their obligations are.
- ✔ Receiving services that are free of physical and mental abuse, bullying, harassment, and discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, race, family status, sexual orientation or disability.
- ✔ Receiving a clear statement about fees.

For more information, see the Department of Health:
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-pubs-c-recovcon>