

# A new deal for depression and anxiety disorders

## Why it matters

- **Misery**  
Chronic mental illness is the biggest single cause of measured misery, as surveys show – more important even than poverty.
- **Politics**  
It affects 1 in 6 people, and 1 in 3 families. They come from all social classes.
- **Employment**  
1 million such people are on Incapacity Benefits and the majority of them receive no proper treatment for their illness. Pathways to Work does not move them into work – they are too ill. They need treatment.
- **Cost-effective treatments**  
A course of up to 16 sessions of modern evidence-based psychological therapy will cure half of those treated, and raise their employment rate. It will pay for itself to the Treasury.  

(Cost of treatment	=	£750)
(Cost of one month on IB	=	£750)
- **Choice**  
NICE Guidelines say that GPs should offer such patients the choice of evidence-based psychological therapy, and surveys show this is what the majority of patients want. But for most patients it is simply not available within the NHS. This is a major complaint of patients and GPs.
- **Misallocation of resources**  
1/3 of GP sessions and 40% of all disability is due to depression and anxiety. But these conditions receive only 2% of NHS expenditure.

## The CSR document proposes

- **A local psychological therapy service** giving evidence-based therapy to meet NICE Guidelines.
- **A 7-year plan** to train the therapists, and roll out high-quality evidence-based services.
- Annual gross **cost** by 2010/11 : £200 m.  
by 2013/14 : £400 m.  
net cost: £0.

## What is needed now

1. **A published strategic plan** (by early 2008) to remedy the present injustice to these patients.
2. **The next NHS Operating Framework** (Xmas 2007) to include this among its very top priorities.