

## 12. Psychotic Episodes and Experiences

Psychosis is a relatively rare mental health experience. It is most commonly diagnosed in young people, who may have experienced a big change in life.

### What can happen?

- We might experience confusion or mixed up thoughts that don't stop and begin to affect our day to day life.
- Things around us may appear changed.
- Our thoughts might be sped up, slowed down or jumbled.
- Our sleep could be disturbed.
- We might experience changes in appetite or activity.
- We could start becoming more withdrawn and isolated.

These symptoms aren't always associated with psychosis but if these experiences develop or get worse, we may start experiencing the following.

### Other symptoms

- We may start believing things that aren't true, or thinking things that others don't believe.
- We may start thinking we have special powers, such as believing we can read the thoughts of others.
- We might be able to see, hear, smell or taste things that other people can't.

- We might become paranoid or suspicious about other people.

Other people such as our family or friends may be better at noticing these changes than we are. These experiences may not be psychosis, but it is important to be **checked out by the GP** if you are worried about yourself, or someone else. There is very good evidence that early intervention can help people with these experiences.

There is a specialist service in Leeds that helps people who may be experiencing an episode of psychosis. You can refer yourself to Aspire, the Early Intervention Service, or talk to them for advice about someone else.

[www.aspireleeds.com](http://www.aspireleeds.com)

0113 2009170

[aspire@commlinks.co.uk](mailto:aspire@commlinks.co.uk)

If you are ever concerned about your safety or the safety of a friend, please call 999 or visit A&E.

See the Counselling and Wellbeing website for helpful online resources on Psychotic Episodes and Experiences:

[students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing](http://students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing)