Alliance for Better Care

Case Study: Preventing Escalation Through Joined-Up Mental Health Support

Background

During a routine health session at Open House, ABC clinicians were asked to see a hostel resident who was visibly distressed and expressing suicidal thoughts.

The client was living with HIV and had previously been making positive progress in stabilising his life. However, confusion around his medication had caused a significant deterioration in his mental wellbeing.

What We Did

The client explained that he had stopped taking both his antidepressants and statins after misunderstanding information from the pharmacy. Due to difficulties with reading comprehension, he became overwhelmed and disengaged from treatment.

Using a calm and supportive approach, ABC clinicians worked alongside the client and involved him in all decisions. With his consent:

- The on-call ABC GP was contacted.
- His key worker from Turning Tides was informed.
- His GP practice was updated regarding the medication concerns.
- Sussex Sexual Health Services were contacted due to concerns around his wellbeing.

The team ensured information was explained in a way he could understand and helped him put a practical safety plan in place before leaving. Open House staff supported him to download the NHS Stay Alive app, and crisis contact details were saved to his phone.

Before leaving the session, he had plans in place for the following day and an appointment arranged with the Mental Health Team.

Impact

The medication issues were resolved quickly, and the client was supported to move to a pharmacy better suited to his needs.

Four weeks later, he appeared significantly brighter, was engaging in activities at Open House, and had attended appointments with both the Mental Health Team and his GP.

This case highlights the importance of accessible, joined-up support for individuals who may struggle to navigate healthcare systems independently.

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