

## Developing your Plan for Staying Well

Having now learnt your 'relapse picture', you may be in a position to recognise your own early warning signs of returning problems. It is important that you are confident about what to do, should you begin to relapse.

Devising a plan for staying well will help you to prepare for the possibility of a relapse. This plan will include your own early warning signs, together with a clear plan of action, to help you manage the signs as they occur.

Your plan for staying well is more likely to succeed if it includes the following:

- personal coping strategies
- how to get access to help
- the involvement of mental health professionals and your family & friends

Although you are the real expert when it comes to your mental health, part of your plan is likely to involve doctors, nurses, and other mental health professionals. These are some of the areas they may be able to help you with:

- monitoring your early signs
- ways of managing your symptoms effectively
- medication advice
- problem solving
- ways of managing unhelpful thoughts
- developing skills in asserting yourself
- learning relaxation skills
- solution-focused approaches

Now, try to complete your plan for staying well with your named nurse or care coordinator, remembering to make it your own. S/he will give you a form to write up your plan. S/he will discuss it with you and help you to complete it.

→ write down your early warning signs

→ write down the practical things that you or other people could do to help