

1

ASSESS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Is the person improving?

NO

YES

RECOMMENDATIONS ON FREQUENCY OF CONTACT

- » Schedule the second appointment within 1 week.
- » Initially maintain regular contact via telephone, home visits, letters, or contact cards more frequently, e.g. monthly, for the first 3 months.




- » **If not yet receiving psychological treatment**, consider psychological treatment.
 - » **If receiving a psychological treatment**, evaluate engagement in and experience of current psychological treatment.
 - » **If not yet on antidepressants**, consider antidepressants.
 - » **If on antidepressants**, assess:
 - **Does the person take the medication as prescribed?**
If not, explore reasons why and encourage adherence.
 - **Are there side effects?**
If yes, evaluate and weigh benefits of treatment.
If no to side effects to antidepressants, increase dose (TABLE 1).
Follow-up in 1-2 weeks. ↻
- ⚠ CAUTION WITH DOSE INCREASE.** CLOSE FOLLOW-UP NEEDED DUE TO POSSIBLE INCREASE IN SIDE EFFECTS.

- » Encourage the person to continue with their current management plan until they are *symptom free for 9-12 months*.
 - » **Arrange a further follow up appointment in 1-2 weeks.** ↻
 - » Decrease contact as the person's symptoms improve, e.g. once every 3 months after the initial 3 months.
- Note: follow up should continue until the person no longer has any symptoms of depression.*

Are there symptoms of mania?

YES


NO

- » Discontinue antidepressant medication.
- » Treat mania and consult a specialist.  Go to » PSY.

2

MONITOR TREATMENT

At every contact:

- » Provide psychoeducation, reduce stress and strengthen social supports, promote functioning in daily activities and community life, and review, if applicable, antidepressant medication use and psychological treatment.
- » Does the person have any new symptoms of concern? Review for MNS and concurrent physical conditions.
- » Is the person a woman of childbearing age and considering pregnancy? If so, **CONSULT A SPECIALIST.** 
- ! Assess for any **IMMINENT RISK OF SUICIDE** (Go to » SUI).

3

REVISE TREATMENT AS APPROPRIATE

Has the person been symptom free for 9-12 months?

NO

YES

- » Continue medication until person is symptom free for 9-12 months.

- » Discuss with the person the risks and benefits of stopping the medication
- » Taper the dose of medication gradually, over a minimum of 4 weeks. Monitor the person for symptom recurrence.