

# BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR NTDs (BPS-N): POCKET GUIDE

## WHAT IS BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT?

Basic Psychological Support (BPS) describes a humane, supportive response to a person who is suffering and may need support.

### PROVIDING BPS-N RESPONSIBLY MEANS:

1. Respecting people's safety, dignity and rights
2. Adapting what you do to take into account the person's **culture**
3. Being aware of other emergency response measures
4. Looking after yourself



### IN PROVIDING BPS-N RESPONSIBLY IN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19:

- » Ensure people know their rights (such as right to treatment and care, being treated with dignity, etc.) as well as their responsibilities in preventing Covid-19, such as their responsibility to follow the guidance of local health authorities and health workers
- » Look after your own physical and mental wellbeing! As a peer supporter, you may also be affected by the NTD or may have family, friends and colleagues who are affected. Pay extra attention to your own wellbeing

- PREPARE**
- » Learn about the NTD(s) in your area (see NTD-specific sections in the main BPS-N Guide)
  - » Learn about available services and supports
  - » Learn about safety and security concerns

### BPS-N ACTION PRINCIPLES

- LOOK**
- » Check for safety
  - » Check for people with obvious urgent basic needs
  - » Check for people with serious distress reactions

- LISTEN**
- » Approach people who may need support
  - » Ask about people's needs and concerns
  - » Listen to people and help them to feel calm

Even if you must communicate from a distance because of safety precautions, you can still give the person your full attention and show that you are listening with care.

## LINK

- »» Help people address basic needs and access services
- »» Help people cope with problems
- »» Give information
- »» Connect people with loved ones and social support

## ETHICS

Ethical do's and don'ts are offered as guidance to avoid causing further harm to the person receiving BPS-N, to provide the best care possible, and to act only in their best interests. Offer help in ways that are most appropriate and comfortable to the people you are supporting. Consider what this ethical guidance means in terms of your cultural context.

## Do's

- »» Be honest and trustworthy
- »» Respect people's right to make their own well-informed decisions
- »» Be aware of and set aside your own biases and prejudices
- »» Make it clear to people that even if they refuse help now, they can still access help in the future
- »» Respect privacy and keep personal details of the person's story confidential, if this is appropriate
- »» Behave appropriately by considering the person's culture, age and gender

## Don'ts

- »» Don't exploit your relationship as a helper
- »» Don't ask the person for any money or favour for helping
- »» Don't make false promises or give false information
- »» Don't exaggerate your skills
- »» Don't force help on people, and don't be intrusive or pushy
- »» Don't pressure people to tell you their story
- »» Don't share personal details of the person's story with others
- »» Don't judge the person for their actions or feelings

## PEOPLE WHO NEED MORE HELP THAN BPS-N ALONE:

Some people will need much more than BPS-N alone. Know your limits and ask for help from others who can provide more advanced mental health support, medical care or other assistance.

## PEOPLE WHO NEED MORE ADVANCED MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IMMEDIATELY:

- »» People who are so upset they cannot care for themselves or their children
- »» People who may hurt themselves
- »» People who may hurt others

Further information may be found in the ILEP/NNN Guides on Stigma and Mental Wellbeing ([www.stigmaguides.org](http://www.stigmaguides.org)).