

FAQs

- **Q: Can I refer people whose mood swings may be driven by other issues than being “at risk of bipolar disorder”, such as a personality disorder or extreme stress response?**
A: Yes – we accept young people whose mood swings may be driven by a number of different factors, as long as the person’s mood experiences fall into one of our three groups.
- **Q: Can I refer someone who is taking antidepressants?**
A: Yes, that is fine. Please consider contacting us even if the person has taken antipsychotics/mood stabilisers previously – it may be that their use falls under the threshold of our exclusion criterion.
- **Q: What are the CBT sessions focused on?**
A: The sessions are client-led and individualised to people’s needs. However, common components include normalising mood; identifying goals and ways of achieving these; identifying different mood states; and identifying more helpful ways of thinking about and responding to moods.
- **Q: How do you support people who are randomised into treatment as usual, as it may be disappointing for them to not receive the CBT?**
A: It is our job to ensure people fully understand the randomised nature of the trial before consenting to participate. We take participants’ safety extremely seriously and will signpost people onto services/professionals if we feel they need extra support. We can also provide feedback from participant assessments to their care team or GP, which can be very helpful in informing the participants’ care throughout services.
- **Q: Where do you meet with participants?**
A: We take an active outreach approach and ensure we meet participants at the most convenient and comfortable location for them, such as their GP surgery or their homes.



Information for Referrers

What is BART?

The Bipolar At Risk Trial (BART) is a randomised controlled trial funded by the National Institute of Health Research. We are comparing the usefulness of cognitive behavioural therapy to treatment as usual for young people experiencing difficulties with mood swings.

Inclusion Criteria

- Aged 16-25
- Help seeking
- Falls into one of three groups, *which the research assistant will assess...*
- Group 1:
Elevated mood for more than 2 days, but less than 7
- Group 2:
Depression for at least 1 week + at least 4 days (separate or continuous) of high mood lasting for at least 4 hours at a time
- Group 3:
Depression for at least 1 week + first degree relative with bipolar disorder

Exclusion Criteria

- Past history of manic episode or psychosis for more than 1 week
- Past treatment with a mood stabiliser for longer than 6 weeks or an antipsychotic for longer than 3 weeks
- Moderate to severe learning disability
- Organic brain disorder
- Non English speaking
- Inpatient / acute psychiatric care needed
- Primary substance dependency

What Happens If I Make A Referral?

Following the young person's verbal consent to be contacted, a BART research assistant will get in touch with them. The research assistant is responsible for assessing whether or not the young person is suitable to participate in the trial. To assess this, the young person will be invited to a baseline appointment which consists of a diagnostic screening tool and questionnaires. They will receive £20 in compensation for attending.

Following the baseline appointment, the BART team will assess whether or not the person meets the BART inclusion (or exclusion) criteria. If the person is eligible, they will be **randomised** into one of two conditions; cognitive behavioural therapy **or** treatment as usual.

All participants will be invited to further follow-up assessment appointments at 6 and 12 months. They will receive a further £20 at each time point.

How to Refer

If you would like to make a referral, please contact one of our research assistants. If you are not sure whether or not someone may be suitable, please do get in touch and our research assistants will be very happy to discuss the young person with you.

Lydia Pearson – Research Assistant
E-mail: Lydia.Pearson@gmw.nhs.uk
Work Mobile: 07827 903 300
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or

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