

Improving services and support for older people with mental health problems

What needs to be done?

Area	What needs to be done?
Ending discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove age barriers to accessing services • Ensure that specialist services for older people are properly resourced • Tackle the stigma attached to mental health issues • Pay more attention to invisible groups like older people with alcohol and drug misuse problems, and people growing older with severe mental health problems
Prioritising prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge the widespread defeatism which leads people to believe that mental health problems are an inevitable part of growing older and therefore nothing can be done • Reduce isolation and strengthen social support for older people • Focus on preventing depression and delirium
Enabling older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put more emphasis on community development initiatives that enable older people to help themselves and each other • Promote peer support • Provide support for unpaid carers
Improving current services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop interventions at the individual and systemic levels • Develop models of collaborative working with mental health specialists • Pay more attention to the role of housing support
Facilitating change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education, training and support • Increase investment • Strengthen leadership

(Taken from 'Improving services and support for older people with mental health problems' – The second report from the UK Inquiry into Mental Health and Well-Being in Later Life, Age Concern).

