**Information for people attending an Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) session with their friend, partner/spouse, or family member**

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) is used to treat various common mental health problems, including depression.

IPT treats depression by exploring the impact of depression on a person’s relationships.

Difficult life events (for example bereavement, or life stressors that are difficult to adapt to) can impact on person’s relationships, or indeed end them, and make a person vulnerable to depression.

Whilst a person is depressed, it can be more difficult for them to function in relationships. Being depressed can make it hard to sleep, and it is common for depressed people to feel low in confidence, tired, irritable, and for them to want to withdraw from contact with other people, even those they feel closest to. Relationships which are usually easy, happy places to be can become strained and sometimes it can be difficult to understand one another.

Whilst someone is receiving IPT, we will be exploring how others in their lives can support their recovery from depression. Attending a session with your loved one or friend gives you a chance to understand more about the therapy they are receiving, to ask any questions you may have about how you can help, and also (if you wish to) to add your own perspective about the situation. It is also a chance for you to discuss any concerns you may have about your loved one’s wellbeing.

The therapy is usually 16 sessions long, and the best time for a friend or family member to join a session is usually session 5 or 6.