

Condition Insight Report (CIR)

Anxiety

Completed in collaboration with
Mind UK

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Overview

Brief overview of the condition

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. It can be experienced in lots of different ways. Some include:

- Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) – this means having regular or uncontrollable worries about many different things in your everyday life.
- Social anxiety disorder – this diagnosis means you experience extreme fear or anxiety triggered by social situations (such as parties, workplaces, or any situation in which you have to talk to another person).
- Panic disorder – this means having regular or frequent panic attacks without a clear cause or trigger. Experiencing panic disorder can mean that you feel constantly afraid of having another panic attack, to the point that this fear itself can trigger your panic attacks.
- Phobias – a phobia is an extreme fear or anxiety triggered by a particular situation (such as social situations) or a particular object (such as spiders).
- Selective Mutism –
- Bulimia -

Others types of Anxiety may include Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), Health anxiety, Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

What is the generally preferred term for someone with this condition?

Someone experiencing anxiety/someone with an anxiety disorder.

Presenting Symptoms

Symptoms are wide ranging and generally debilitating. In severe anxiety a constant state of **hysteria**, being worried about everything, can manifest. Regardless of variations, all anxiety disorders share one major symptom: **consistent or severe fear or worry** in situations where most people wouldn't usually feel threatened. Some have feelings of fright that hit out of the blue and repeatedly without any warning. This is a long-term condition which may cause individuals to feel anxious about a wide range of situations and issues, rather than one specific event. An individual with anxiety can experience both physical and psychological symptoms.

Physical symptoms include:

- Nausea,
- Tense muscles,
- Headaches,
- Pins and needles,
- Feeling light headed or dizzy,
- Faster breathing,
- Sweating and hot flushes,
- Fast or irregular thumping heartbeat,
- Raised blood pressure,
- Needing the toilet more frequently,
- Churning in the pit of the stomach,
- Panic attacks

Psychological symptoms include:

- Feeling tense, nervous, on edge, trapped
- Having a sense of dread,
- Feeling like the world is speeding up or slowing down,
- Paranoia about others looking at you,
- Feeling restless, and
- Finding it difficult to concentrate.

Watch a group talk about their lived experience of panic attacks **HERE**

Watch Jade discuss her lived experience of selective mutism **HERE**

Watch Laura talk about her lived experience of bulimia **HERE**

Fluctuations



Severe panic attacks that strike with no warning. Whilst many get simple apprehension things like the prospect of mingling with others at a party, severe panic is debilitating and is fear of actions, such as driving a vehicle, or intrusive unpleasant thoughts can occur, making it very difficult or sometimes impossible to carry these activities out.

Whilst many have a level of anxiety which is present at all times there are triggers which can impact the unpredictable panic which can change hour to hour, day to day and/or week to week depending on various factors.

Exploring the extent of this for the individual and getting a clear understanding of majority of days for them is KEY. Think about exploring things like:

- **What type and level of anxiety**
Can they quantify this, do they use a scale and can they describe it? What level of severity? Can they share what a 'typical' day might be for them?
- **Increased/general anxiety triggers**
Is there a particular situation/object/task which is a specific trigger and what amount of this is enough to cause further limitation? E.g. the thought of, carrying it out alone etc.
How are triggers managed?
- **Panic attacks**
How long do they last? How are they managed?
How often to they occur? What triggers?

Reliability

What specific areas should be covered to ensure a complete, reflective report?

SAFETY



Do they have any symptoms which could cause a safety consideration?

Safety risks can manifest to the individual as a result of their own actions. You need to clearly explore how the anxiety manifests and how they respond to it to determine what risks, if any you need to consider in the appropriate activities.

TIMELY



For any activities where restriction is reported how long does it take them to complete these activities? Has how long it takes them changed over time?

Understanding what the anxiety is linked to will help you determine where to explore timing factors. For social anxiety exploring how they reach their destination for a specific time and how they interact with strangers and how long it takes to form a supportive bond where they might feel less anxious is important. If it is general anxiety consider exploring distraction triggers and management and exploring timings within relevant activities.

ACEPTABLE
STANDARD



How have they adapted to completing tasks over time – is this different to what might be considered 'normal'?

This is what may be considered 'good enough'. Remember that for example within A11 being anxious on a journey may be relatively 'normal' as most people may worry about their timings or things going wrong. However being so anxious that it impacts the ability to complete the journey is not acceptable. Understand what triggers the anxiety, to what extent and how its managed.

REPEATEDLY



Are they able to repeat a task as often as required? Is this the same every day?

Anxiety can be constant or be triggered. You need to determine whether for any discussion of ability if this is the case for a 'typical day' representing the majority or whether whilst they might complete tasks this is not a consistent picture. It would help to explore how they feel before during and after any task completion to support your understanding.

Sensitivities

What areas might they find difficult to mention or perhaps understate the impact of?

They may find it embarrassing to talk about their symptoms and may worry that they will not be taken seriously. They may also underestimate the impact that anxiety is having on their physical health.

The psychological and physical impact that anxiety can have on an individual can be extremely profound. People may find it difficult to understand and empathise with them, making the individual feel more isolated and withdrawn.



Customer Care

How is it best to ask about any sensitive topics and what are the common courtesies?



In general

- Take their mental health problem seriously; **be understanding and empathetic** and try not to put the individual under any pressure.
- **Don't just focus on their physical ability** to undertake daily activities but how it affects them personally (i.e. anxiety before, during and after the activity).
- **Include the person in the consultation** process by asking them if there is anything that you can do to make them feel more comfortable.
- **Let them know what to expect** from the process and spend a little longer explaining what you need from them and what they can expect during your introduction.
- You could **ask them if there are any adjustments** that would make them feel more comfortable during the assessment e.g. ask if they would feel more comfortable if a friend or family member was to come with them.
- Encourage them to **take their time**.



During face to face interactions

- **Offer them breaks** if they need it, provide water and tell them where the nearest toilets and exits are.

Functional Impact

A brief summary of the functional impact those living with this condition may experience

Activity 1: Preparing food

Depending on the state/ trigger of the anxiety will depend on the extent they are affected for this task. Anxiety can cause distraction and difficult engagement in or initiation of the task.

Remember in PIP...

Specifics around whether they complete this task, how often and under what circumstances is required. Any restrictions need to be explored such as ritualistic behaviour, triggers for any anxiety and how they manage this.

Activity 2: Taking nutrition

Anxiety can reduce appetite and cause distraction. For some, food can be the source of their anxiety and can cause limitations with their initiation of eating and having enough nutrition.

Remember in PIP...

You need to have established the individual's ability to be nourished. Where there is anxiety such as any ritualistic anxiety, eating disorders, body dysmorphia etc. how do they manage this. How is their weight managed? How often are they eating?

Activity 3: Managing therapy and monitoring a health condition

Whilst many may manage their anxiety with medication, some may have CBT to support their condition.

Remember in PIP...

Therapy input in a domestic setting, which covers majorities of weeks and where they require supervision, assistance or prompting to complete should be explored and considered.

Ensure to explore how any medication is managed including compensation strategies like alarms to combat restrictions to combat where there is severe anxiety around medication management.

Functional Impact

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Activity 4: Washing and Bathing

Depending on the level of anxiety a person experiences may distract them from personal care all together, or others may become obsessive over being clean.

Remember in PIP...

Consider the specifics of what, if anything impairs their ability to get washed. E.g. where there is OCD consider time taken to complete the task and explore what management strategies are used to manage the effects of symptoms e.g. timers/prompting from others.

Activity 5: Managing toileting needs and incontinence

Individuals may experience toileting restrictions from another condition or be so concerned with hygiene that they over clean themselves post toileting.

Remember in PIP...

Whilst there might not be a restriction here consider that some may have extreme anxiety and compulsive behaviour about toileting and cleaning themselves or whether it is hand hygiene and general which is addressed in A4. You need specific detail to determine if it can be considered here.

Activity 6: Dressing and undressing

Individuals may report reduction in their concern for appearance and getting dressed regularly due to the level of their anxiety.

Remember in PIP...

Consider the specifics of what, if anything impairs their ability to get dressed and how this is managed with specifics. Consider if this is on majority of days.

Functional Impact

A brief summary of the functional impact those living with this condition may experience

Activity 7: Communicating Verbally

Depending on the extent of any social phobia an individual may become so overwhelmingly anxious that they are mute and struggle to communicate with strangers or particular individuals. If they are in this state they are likely to require support to communicate.

Remember in PIP...

There are specific boundaries for basic and complex. How their emotions impact on their ability to manage relationships and respond to an individual is likely to be covered in A9. Selective mutism can be considered here if they are completely unable to communicate, use text to speech software, or communicate through a family member. Gather specific detail.

Activity 8: Reading and understanding signs and symbols

Anxiety can be a common co-morbidity for other conditions.

Remember in PIP...

That there are specific boundaries for what is considered basic and complex. Ensure to explore for specifics where a restriction is reported to determine if simple and/or complex criteria is met. Whilst concentration can break someone's reading focus you need to consider whether it is sufficient to impair their ability to understand and process the written information.

Activity 9: Engaging with others face to face

Social anxiety can affect an individual's ability to form relationships with others and effectively engage in social situations. Many need support to do so, or will only do so with certain individuals.

Remember in PIP...

Cover where specific restrictions are reported how they manage this. Detail of any support provided and whether this support can be provided by anyone or only specific individuals.

Functional Impact

A brief summary of the functional impact those living with this condition may experience

Activity 10: Budgeting

People with anxiety may find themselves worrying all the time about things that are part of their everyday life or about things that are unlikely to happen, which can impair their ability to plan and budget for the future.

Remember in PIP...

That there are **defined** boundaries for what is considered basic and complex. Ensure to explore for specifics where a restriction is reported to determine if simple and/or complex criteria is met.

Activity 11: Planning and following a journey

Anxiety can make a person very nervous and tense and cause difficulty concentrating to complete a journey. For some, it can cause such overwhelming anxiety that results in panic attacks, they may avoid journeys all together.

Remember in PIP...

Where there are associated conditions you must explore the 4 stages to a journey 1. Frequency and type of outings 2. before a journey 3. during a journey and 4 post a journey. Any social anxiety and/or anxiety related to change? If so to what extent, how and when does this manifest, how it is managed, is it present on all journeys or just unfamiliar ones? How would they manage any changes that occurred?

Activity 12: Moving Around

Anxiety is a common comorbidity with other conditions.

Remember in PIP...

Unless they have other comorbidities they are unlikely to have restriction in this area. Make sure you appropriately explore all conditions and refer to resources available to you for support on exploring this as needed.

Additional reading or other resources

EXTERNAL

- <http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/#.WDgrHn2gXps>
- For further information including medications see NHS Conditions and Treatments: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>

INTERNAL

- Desktop Aid – Activity 11, MSE
- CPD Activity 11

Version control