

Training Resource Material

Mental Health Branch

Case Study 1

CAMHS

Robert

Robert is a 15-year-old boy who is under a statutory order. His protective worker takes him to a GP because she has become very concerned about both his mental and physical health. He has been showing gradually increasing signs of distress and aggressive behaviour in his supported accommodation. He has been using cannabis since he was 12 years old but has increased his use in the last two months, saying to residential support staff that he would “go crazy” if he wasn’t using cannabis daily. He has been observed displaying “odd” behaviour, talking to himself in his room and curling up in a ball when workers approach him. He is suspicious of strangers and has significant sleep disturbance, often pacing around at night then having difficulty getting out of bed during the day. He is fearful of going to hospital and refuses mental health intervention. He says he will “run away” rather than see a mental health practitioner. Eventually he agrees to see the local General Practitioner. While at the surgery, Robert becomes extremely agitated, he reports having auditory hallucinations and suicidal thoughts.

Case Study 2

CAMHS

Christina

Christina is a 14-year-old girl who lives with her parents and two younger siblings. She was referred to the CAMHS duty worker by her school who are very concerned that Christina has not been at school for the last two months. Christina’s mother is extremely distressed and described to the school a situation where Christina will not leave the house. She refuses to shower, will only eat restricted foods and is convinced her mother is trying to poison her. She refuses to see anyone, including her friends and relatives, and locks herself in her room if anyone visits the home. During these times she has self-harmed by cutting her arms with a knife (surface scratches). Her parents have tried to coax her to the doctor's but she doesn't think she's sick and refuses to leave the house. If her parents attempt to get help for her she becomes agitated. There is a family history of anxiety and depression. A maternal aunt suicided last year and the parents are fearful that if they force her to get help she might do something terrible! They are not prepared to hospitalise her. Christina’s mother has taken indefinite leave from her part time employment to be at home with Christina. The duty worker arranges a home-based assessment.