WHAT IS PSYCHOSIS?

Psychosis is a mental state where a person loses the capacity to tell what’s real from what isn’t. They may believe or sense things that aren’t real and become confused or slow in their thinking.

SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF PSYCHOSIS

**Delusions**
false, irrational beliefs that can’t be changed by evidence and aren’t shared by other people from the same cultural background.

**Hallucinations**
seeing, hearing, tasting or smelling something that isn’t present. Most common are voices that are negative.

**Disordered thinking**
thoughts and speech that become jumbled or slowed. They mix up sentences or change topic frequently.

**Disordered behaviour**
Feeling agitated, acting childishly, swearing or otherwise act inappropriately. In severe cases, they may become unresponsive to the world around them.
Factors that contribute to psychosis

- Genetic Factors
- Substance Abuse
- Grief and loss
- Ongoing problems at school or work
- Difficult times with family and friends

Getting Help

Antipsychotic medications are first-line medication treatment for psychotic conditions. They have been shown in clinical trials to be effective in treating symptoms and behaviours associated with the disorder. Antipsychotic medications have significant side effects; assessment and management of these adverse effects are an important part of treatment.

Psychotherapy is aimed at teaching techniques for coping with stress and improving quality of life. The most effective therapies include cognitive behavioural therapy and family-based therapy.

Assistance with goals to do with study or work can reduce stress and help people with psychosis.

Improving general health and reducing stress through activities such as art, music and exercise can support recovery. Avoiding drugs and alcohol and getting good sleep can also help.

For more information on psychosis, contact:
Mental Health Foundation Australia
www.mhfa.org.au

1300 643 287
supportgroup@mhfa.org.au