

## Chapter 17: Planning to prevent or reduce relapse

### *Relapse prevention plans: downloadable chart*

**Purpose of this chart:** To develop a plan to prevent relapse if you notice triggers or warning signs and to reduce the severity or duration of an episode if it occurs.

#### **Tips for using this chart**

- You can use the template to develop different plans for the different episodes you experience
- Ideas for useful strategies to include in your plan can be found in the following sections of the book:
  - Chapter 9: ways of dealing with triggers
  - Chapters 11,12,13: ways of managing depressive symptoms
  - Chapter 14 and 15: ways of managing warning symptoms of mania
  - Chapter 17: figures 17.1 and 17.2 have detailed examples of relapse reduction plans for depression and mania
- Strategies need to be practical and realistic a few core strategies may be better than a lot of complicated ones
- Different people can provide you with different types of support which can be part of your plan
- Make sure you keep all contact details up to date and update your plans as you learn more about your illness and what works for you
- Discuss your plan with all those people it involves – it can be helpful to give everyone a copy of this plan.

**For more detailed instructions, explanations and *examples* of using this chart see pp. 214 of *Living with Bipolar*.**

My plan for preventing or reducing (fill in mood state either: depressive, manic, mixed or hypomanic) relapse

## 1. Useful Information

### Health care details

*List Medicare, health insurance, pension card or any other numbers that may be*

*useful to you when you need to obtain treatment:*

### Clinicians' contact details

*List more than one name if possible in case your doctor is unavailable or if you wish to*

*contact your caseworker or psychologist.*

Doctor's name:

Phone number:

Doctor's emergency number:

Other clinician's name:

Phone number:

Other clinician's emergency number:

Hospital emergency department

Phone number:

### Key support people

Name:

Phone numbers:

Name:

Phone numbers:

Name:

Phone numbers:

Name:

Phone numbers:

## **2. Managing triggers**

### **Triggers to monitor**

*List the high-risk situations or triggers that might lead to or worsen symptoms.*

### **Ways to manage triggers**

*List the things that you can do to manage these triggers and how others can support your strategies.*

### **Things not to do**

*List the ways you may sometimes manage triggers that are not helpful or make things worse.*

### **3. Managing warning or early symptoms**

#### **Warning/ early symptoms to monitor**

*List your typical warning symptoms/early symptoms of this type of mood episode so you can intervene early.*

#### **Ways to manage warning or early symptoms**

*List the things that you can do to prevent or reduce relapse if you notice warning or early symptoms and ways key people can support your strategies.*

#### **Things not to do**

*List the things that you may sometimes do to cope with warning or early symptoms that may make your symptoms worse.*

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#### **4. Being prepared if things get worse**

*List what you or others can do if your symptoms get worse.*