

HOT TOPIC – MARCH 2022

BIPOLAR DISORDER

WORLD BIPOLAR DAY – 30TH MARCH

What is Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar disorder is a mental health problem that affects an individual's mood. It is a severe, lifelong mental illness which is usually characterised by significant mood swings from manic highs to suicidal depression.

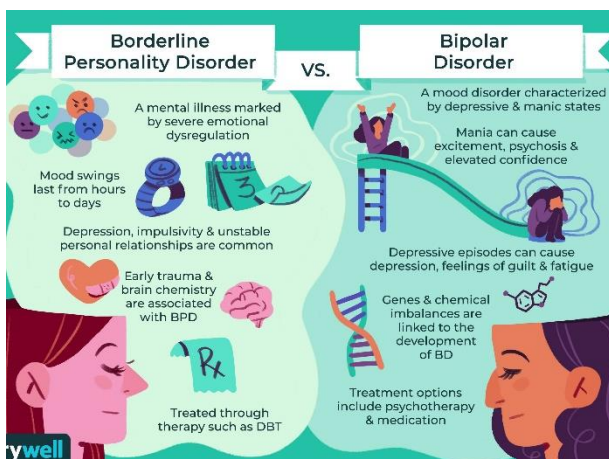
Both men and women of any age and of any social or ethnic background can develop bipolar.

Bipolar Disorder and Crime

According to The Independent, people with mental illness are no more likely to commit violent crime than ordinary members of the public. Substance abuse is the chief cause of violent crime and increases the risk equally in people with and without mental illness.

Researchers from Oxford University carried out a study with colleagues from Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm that looked at the risk of people with bipolar disorder committing violent crimes such as assault and robbery, compared with general population. It found that although bipolar disorder was associated with a higher risk of violent crime, the increase in risk came from drug and alcohol use.

Is Bipolar Disorder the same as Borderline Personality Disorder?



Considerations as a Police Officer

- People with mental health issues may have difficulty communicating and interacting with you
- Up to 90% of prisoners and two fifths of those on community sentences have a mental health problem
- You may be the first person to respond to urgent situations involving people with mental health problems and have to make quick decisions to ensure theirs and others safety.

Effective Communication with someone with mental health problems

1. Explain who you are, what your role is and what they can expect from you
2. Acknowledge and respect how they are feeling
3. Listen sensitively and actively
4. Use responsive body language
5. Use a calm and reassuring tone
6. Ask short, simple questions
7. Reflect back information and summarise issues to show you have listened
8. Be honest and transparent about what is going on
9. Provide a named officer they can contact
10. Provide regular updates on what is going on and why decision have been taken

Discussion Points

- What should you do if the person becomes angry of abusive?
- What should you do if the person is experiencing hallucinations or delusions?

