

Schizophrenia can definitely be treated

Mental Health and You is provided as a service of the North of Superior Programs. The purpose of these articles is to inform the community about mental health issues.

These articles will cover a variety of mental health issues. If you would like to comment on this article or any of the other articles that have appeared, feel free to write to the *News* office, P.O. Box 579,

Terrace Bay, Ontario, POT 2W0. Any opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the management of the North of Superior Programs.

By Hadley Koltun

Schizophrenia can be treated
Last time, I spoke about schizophrenia as a common form of mental illness. Nobody quite knows what it is but it is characterized by delusions (false and irrational beliefs), numbed feelings, disordered thinking and a temporary break in reality. There may even be auditory or visual hallucinations. The cause of schizophrenia is not known for sure.

Many researchers believe it results from an inherited or genetic tendency towards the illness.

Environmental factors such as stress may cause a psychotic episode (eg. when all the symptoms are exhibited).

Like many other types of physical and mental illness, schizophrenia has no cure. Mental health professionals can only help to control schizophrenia with the help of medication, psychotherapy and family and community support programs.

1. Medication: there are a group of drugs that help to control the delusion of thinking (false beliefs) of schizophrenic individuals.

They may even help to lift their mood. These drugs are responsible for correcting the chemical imbalance within the brain responsible for many of the symptoms.

However, they only help to control the symptoms but medication is not a cure for schizophrenia.

Some schizophrenic individuals respond quickly to drugs but others need long-term treatment.

Patients on anti-psychotic medication (another name for this group of drugs) are urged not to use alcohol or street drugs. The interaction of these drugs with alcohol or street drugs may be harmful.

2. Psychotherapy: psychotherapy helps to break down the painful isolation that an individual may be experiencing. It

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Tues. Dec. 22

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