Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Person
- Rates are higher in people who have been forced to move (refugees, trafficked people)
- Trauma may include: sexual abuse/rape, road accident, traumatic birth, natural disaster, violence, military combat
- Complex PTSD may be found in people who have repeatedly experienced traumatic events, such as children who are neglected or abused
- May be engaging in destructive behaviour: misusing alcohol or drugs, self-harm
- Often re-experiences the event(s)
- Negative thoughts leading to anxiety & depression
- Hyperarousal: irritability, aggression, difficulty concentrating
- Feelings of shame or guilt
- May also feel suicidal
- May experience psychosis
- NB: Increase in rates in young women in England

Family & Friends
- May have experienced bereavement, loss
- May withdraw and appear "emotionally numb"
- May avoid talking about experiences or remembering - cut off people, avoid certain places
- May have difficulty trusting people
- These symptoms can affect relationships and work: the person may become more isolated, lose their job

Environment
- Risk of homelessness
- May struggle to find suitable sustainable employment
- May not be registered with a GP

Physical health
- Disturbed sleep including insomnia and nightmares
- May re-live events, experiencing pain, sweating, nausea, shivering
- Symptoms or "somatisation": headaches, stomach aches, chest pains

Needs
- Recognition of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Recognition of underlying cause(s)
- Specialist services (trauma-informed care, sexual abuse services, domestic violence services)
- Involve patient in treatment decisions
- Support the individual and their family
- Provide information
- Consider treating PTSD before depression
- Trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy or eye movement desensitisation & reprocessing

ICD-10: Post-traumatic stress disorder F43.1