



SA Federation for  
Mental Health

## SCHIZOPHRENIA SPECTRUM AND OTHER PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

There are five key symptoms that define schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders:

### **Delusions**

Delusions are beliefs that a person holds which cannot be changed regardless of conflicting evidence proving these beliefs to be untrue. The delusions may vary in their content, but common delusions include persecutory, referential, somatic and religious.

### **Hallucinations**

A hallucination is a sensory experience of something that does not exist outside the mind. Hallucinations can involve any of the senses, but auditory hallucinations are the most common in schizophrenia and related disorders. These auditory hallucinations are typically experienced as voices.

### **Disorganized thinking (speech)**

Disorganized thinking is usually picked up in the way a person speaks. The person may switch from one topic to another without any clear link between the two, or answers to questions may be unrelated. In rare cases disorganised thinking may lead to speech being incomprehensible.

### **Grossly Disorganized or Abnormal Motor Behaviour (including Catatonia)**

Grossly disorganized or abnormal motor behaviour may manifest as childlike or silly behaviour, or as irregular agitation which can lead to challenges with everyday functionality. Catatonic behaviour is characterised by a marked decrease in reactions to the environment. This can range from resistance to instructions, to maintaining a rigid or inappropriate posture, to a complete lack of movement or speech.



**SA Federation for  
Mental Health**

## **Negative Symptoms**

The negative symptoms of schizophrenia include problems with motivation, social withdrawal, diminished affective responsiveness, speech, and movement. These symptoms play a large role in the poor functional outcomes and quality of life for individuals with schizophrenia.

**Remember to always consult a mental health or medical practitioner regarding any questions you may have about a mental health diagnosis and treatment options.**

This factsheet is based on information obtained from the DSM-5:  
American Psychiatric Association, 2013. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition.*