

Psychiatry in pictures

EDITED BY ALLAN BEVERIDGE

Do you have an image, preferably accompanied by 100 to 200 words of explanatory text, that you think would be suitable for Psychiatry in Pictures? Submissions are very welcome and should be sent direct to Dr Allan Beveridge, Queen Margaret Hospital, Whitefield Road, Dunfermline, Fife KY12 0SU, UK.



Aboriginal art therapy

Chosen by Aleksandar Janca. For Aboriginal Australians, art represents a communion between the individual and the ancestral creation beings that made the country. The act of creating art is often perceived as a personal religious experience and the surface of the painting becomes some kind of gateway where the world of the painter enters the other world of the ancestors. Paintings, drawings and other types of individual and group artwork are also important and culturally appropriate therapeutic activities for Australian indigenous people suffering from mental illness. Aboriginal art therapy provides indigenous psychiatric patients with an atmosphere of trust, openness and freedom, where they can be creative, feel safe, relax and enjoy structured and non-structured activities during psychiatric hospitalisations. These images have been selected to illustrate the Aboriginal art therapy provided by the Aboriginal Mental Health Unit at Graylands Hospital in Perth, Western Australia. They have been produced by patients with psychosis in response to the Aboriginal art therapy assignment entitled 'the spirits of mental illness'.