

ID: The DDA Logo, A green rectangle with capitalised, centrally aligned white text 'The Dissociative Disorders Alliance'



September 2026

The Dissociative Disorders Alliance (The DDA) responds to the Royal College of Psychiatrists' historic apology for trauma care failings.

The Dissociative Disorders Alliance (The DDA) acknowledges and welcomes the public apology and position statement issued by the Royal College of Psychiatrists¹. We are heartened that this statement includes the voices of people with lived and living experience of childhood sexual abuse.

The DDA is a charity established by and for individuals living with complex dissociative disorders, their allies, and dedicated professionals. Our vision is for an improved quality of life, healing, and recovery for people in the UK living with a complex dissociative disorder

For decades, our community has navigated a landscape of historical scepticism, systemic misdiagnosis, and avoidable iatrogenic harm. The formal recognition of complex dissociative disorders including Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) as valid survival strategies—rather than pathologies to be dismissed—is a critical, long-overdue step toward truth and accountability. Lived experience has always known what clinical frameworks are only now formalising: that dissociation is an understandable, resourceful response to overwhelming trauma.

A core pillar of our strategic mission is building cohesive alliances. Complex trauma, systemic misdiagnosis, and historical institutional failures cannot be dismantled by any single organisation alone. Real, lasting change requires a unified commitment to offering meaningful care. We believe that progress is achieved when we pool our collective expertise—combining the profound insight of lived experience with the influence of others who understand, including relevant charities, clinicians, and professional bodies.

For this apology to mark a genuine turning point, it must serve as the foundation for immediate, structural overhaul and dedicated statutory funding across the NHS.

The DDA notes that the section about dissociation is brief. We would have welcomed more about the impact of trauma on the body (somatoform dissociation). Acknowledgment of extreme organised and/or ritualised abuse would have also been welcomed. This sometimes continues well into adulthood and needs full recognition, understanding and specialist support.

We welcome this validation of survivor testimony, and our focus remains firmly on the work ahead. Moving forward, The DDA will work towards collaborating with professionals, challenging inadequate care models, and advocating for an NHS infrastructure that listens to and respects people with lived/living experience and adequately funds the pathways necessary for true trauma recovery and healing.

– ENDS –

Reference

- 1) Royal College of Psychiatrists (2026) Position Statement PS04/26 – Addressing the impact of non-recent child sexual abuse of adults© 2026 The Royal College of Psychiatrists.
https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/better-mh-policy/position-statements/position-statement---ps04-26.pdf?sfvrsn=691e2b0e_10

Notes to Editors

About The Dissociative Disorders Alliance (The DDA):

The DDA is a charity set up by and for people living with complex dissociative disorders, their allies, and professionals working in the field. Our vision is for an improved quality of life, healing and recovery for people in the UK living with a complex dissociative disorder. The DDA aims to achieve this by:

- developing clear, accessible and lived experience led information and resources,
- developing supportive and empowering peer led initiatives,
- improving awareness, understanding and quality of care among health and social care practitioners and,
- developing alliances with other national and international practitioners and charities, working alongside them to improve outcomes for people living with complex dissociative disorders.

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