

Core Competencies

Clinical Division of Consultation Liaison Psychiatry

The Hong Kong College of Psychiatrists

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The core competencies outlines the generic knowledge, skills and attitudes, or behaviour, that we believe is common to all psychiatric specialties, especially those that are specific to specialists in Liaison Psychiatry.

Trainees are expected to acquire the core competencies during their training period starting within their undergraduate career and develop throughout their postgraduate career. It is expected that trainees will progressively acquire higher levels of competence during training.

Objective 1: To perform specialist assessment of C-L patients and document relevant history and examination

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessment of major clinical disorders or situations in C-L settings including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delirium or dementia and other psychiatric disorders with organic cause - Somatoform disorders and chronic pain with associated abnormal illness behavior - Depression and anxiety in medically ill patients - Suicide or self-harm behavior - Addiction problems - Coping with chronic disease and terminal illness - Management of patients with psychiatric disorders in need of medical or surgical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To manage the referral process and to obtain necessary information prior to seeing a patient. This involves communication with medical staff, nurses, and other staff as relevant; ● To interview medically ill patients and their relatives, including appropriate introduction and commencement of a psychiatric interview, and the use of particular techniques relevant to medically ill patients or somatizing patients; ● To understand the systemic and scenic aspects of referrals and issues of transference or countertransference in the relationship between physicians, staff, and patients; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To develop appropriate attitudes as a psychiatrist working as a member of a multidisciplinary team, whose other members do not have psychiatric training or background. ● To preserve confidentiality even when under pressure to disclose confidential details; ● To ensure that aspects of mental health ordinance are considered appropriately;

treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To communicate with severely ill patients and dying patients and their loved ones;● To make appropriate reply to the referring specialty in a language easily understood by all medical and nursing attendants while preserving confidentiality;● To communicate with other specialties' colleges and nurses; as well as mental health providers outside the hospital.	
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Objective 2: To construct formulations of patients' problems, including appropriate differential diagnoses

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Awareness of the bio-psycho-social and psycho-physiological models used as bases of the subject.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To report the history of patients with physical and psychiatric disorders;● To formulate a diagnostic summary and to develop clear goals of intervention even when there is a complex combination of physical, psychological, and social factors contributing to the problem;● To draw up an appropriate differential diagnosis when physical and psychiatric disorders are present;● To construct a diagnostic formulation, including psychodynamic and other psychological, social, and environmental aspects, when physical disease is also present;	

Objective 3: Ability to recommend relevant investigation and treatment in the context of clinical management plan

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● An awareness of the administrative aspects of Mental Health Ordinance influencing management in non-mental health settings.● Understanding of the current national standards, policies and guidelines in relation to the mental health and social care needs of patients in medical and surgical settings● Joint working with general hospital colleagues in implementing the above standards and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Safely use and manage psychotropic medications● To be able to confidently diagnose, manage and co-ordinate complex liaison cases in both in-patient and out-patient settings.	

Objective 4: Ability to comprehensively assess and document patient's potential for self-harm or harm to others

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good knowledge of Mental Health Ordinance ● Knowledge of all relevant and current guidance for management of self-harm, including that published by international guidelines ● Knowledge of involuntary treatment standards and procedures ● Demonstrate awareness of specialist aspects of the law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to intervene effectively to minimize risk ● Ability to implement prevention methods against self-harm or harm to others ● Independently assess and manage patients with mental illnesses including uncommon conditions, in emergencies ● Demonstrate expertise in applying the principles of crisis intervention in emergency situations ● Make care plans in urgent situations where information may be incomplete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain good professional attitudes and behaviour when responding to situations of ambiguity and uncertainty ● Be prepared to give advice to others on the use of mental health and allied legislation

Objective 5: Ability to conduct therapeutic interviews

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate the acquisition of more advanced treatment skills including<ul style="list-style-type: none">- a range of individual, group and family therapies using standard accepted models and integration of various therapies including biological and social cultural interventions into everyday treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate the use of psychotherapeutic skills with physically ill patients and patients with medically unexplained symptoms● Demonstrate ability to utilize psychotherapeutic skills in assisting staff groups, in acute hospital, in management of complex situations● Evaluate the outcome of psychological treatments delivered either by self or others and organise subsequent management appropriately● Explain, initiate, conduct and complete a range of psychological therapies, with appropriate supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Continue to practice and develop a range of treatment skills

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Display the ability to provide expert advice to other health and social care professionals on psychological treatment and care	
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Objective 6: Competent to provide specialist assessment, treatment and management of patients with severe mental illness in general hospital settings

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Understand Mental Health Ordinance and other relevant legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Conduct mental health and capacity assessment, and provide management for SMI patients in general hospital settings according to Mental Health Ordinance and the relevant legislation, with an awareness of legal complexity relating the interaction of physical and mental health problems.	

Objective 7: Effective communication with patients, relatives and colleagues

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Understand the relationship between physical illness and psychological distress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Able to conduct interviews to facilitate information gathering from the concerned parties.● Able to liaise with the concerned parties to form therapeutic alliances.● Discuss mental health issues with medical and surgical patients.● Discuss biopsychosocial management plan with patients.	

Objective 8: Ability to work with colleagues

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To understand the models of consultation-liaison psychiatry● To explain and negotiate with general hospital and mental health colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To be able to collaborate effectively and actively and develop negotiating skills with general hospital colleagues.● To work with and support primary care in managing complex cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Contribute to Mental Health Promotion in the acute hospital

Objective 9: Develop appropriate leadership skills

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Understand operation models in major clinical service, especially in relation to medical departments and accident and emergency departments● Use knowledge of the epidemiology of mental illness in service planning, taking into account:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local circumstances• Collaboration and relation between various departments in the hospital or cluster• Corporate strategy• Future development of health care model	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Contribute to the development of care packages for patients with various physical health problems under the collaboration with experts from all sectors and dimensions. The cooperation with consultation liaison nurses is especially an important component in this area● Active formulation of management plan of patients with specific psychiatric disorders encountered in general ward setting, especially in its first presentation and upon relapses:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schizophrenia and related psychosis• Mood disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The committed attitude to explore for potential of service development through empirical need as well as evidence based strategy is a requisite factor in this area.● A strong sense of responsibility of the outcome of such development should not only be demonstrated by the leaders within the team but also to the stake holders outside the team. The ownership of accountability could allay the fears of shifting risk and challenging/adverse exposure to one specialty or discipline to another.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delirium, mental or behavioural disorders related to underlying physical problems, especially in patients with oncological or renal problem• Adjustment disorders arising from personal crisis.• Medico-legal issue related to mental health ordinance in general ward settings• Various pain disorders• Eating disorders	
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Objective 10: Ability to conduct and complete audit in clinical practice

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
Ability to conduct and complete audit in clinical practice	Able to identify where clinical audits requires collaboration with general hospital colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Hold a positive attitude to the potential of audit in evaluating and improving the quality of care● Show willingness to apply continuous improvement and audit principles to own work and practice● Show willingness to support and encourage others to apply audit principles

Objective 11: Ability to teach, assess and appraise

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
To develop the ability to teach, assess and appraise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teach psychiatric colleagues, allied healthcare professionals and students about liaison psychiatry.● Impart specialist skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in teaching colleagues in all disciplines● Engage patient or carer groups in teaching processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate an ability to adapt teaching or training to the needs of particular learners

Objective 12: To acts as in a professional manner at all times

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes demonstrated through behaviours
Professional Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● To provide best practice with high ethical standards and personal behaviours.● To ensure that the doctor acts in a professional manner at all times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Practise and behave at all times in accordance with the contemporary standards of professional practice.● Understand the rights of doctors, patients, carers and the public and the management in the context of Mental Health Ordinance.