

The RCGP Curriculum

The Curriculum Topic Guides

Super-Condensed Topic Guides 2021



Mental Health

The Role of the GP and emerging issues in primary care

- Generate and maintain rapport with the patient, family and carers to manage both physical and mental health
- Risk assess patients, offer “safety-netting” advice and intervene where necessary
- Investigate, diagnose and manage mental health conditions and refer when appropriate. Improved patient pathways are being developed that will better integrate primary, community and secondary care as well as the transitions of care (e.g., from child to adult).
- Work within multidisciplinary teams and within agreed protocols such as the Mental Health Act and the Mental Capacity Act.
- The role of self-referral for self-help talking therapies
- Recognise anxiety and depression in the older population as indicators of early dementia
- Significant mental health illness is common within the vulnerable population including refugees and migrants
- Mental health in patients with long term conditions: The need to focus on the interactions between mental and physical health and the need for holistic care
- Suicide prevention and community resilience
- Balancing confidentiality with safeguarding issues
- Social circumstances can impact on mental health, managing social circumstances can help aid recovery. The evidence base for the positive relationship between work and mental health
- Cultural sensitivity and awareness; cultural dimensions of mental illness, including assumptions that may not be universal

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Symptoms and Signs

- Biological features of depression
- Hallucinations
- Medically unexplained symptoms including somatoform disorders
- Mental health can manifest itself physically including somatoform disorders and medically unexplained symptoms
- Sleep disturbance
- Thought disorders

Common and Important Conditions

- Acute mental health: psychosis, acute organic reactions, suicidal and psychological crisis – Application of the Mental Health Act
- Addictive and dependent behaviour: alcohol and substance misuse
- Affective disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Eating disorders
- Learning disabilities
- Long term mental health conditions and their impact
- Models of mental health that may be useful in understanding psychosomatic complaints and medically unexplained symptoms
- Personality disorders
- Self-harm and suicidal thought disorders

Examinations and Procedures

- Mental state examination
- Physical examinations including cardiovascular, abdominal and neuro exams
- Risk assess suicidal ideation, co-create and implement immediate safety plan with patient

Investigations

- Screening for metabolic and cardiovascular risk factors
- Assessment tools for mental health conditions
- Monitoring of treatments such as anxiolytics and antipsychotic medication
- Relevant physical investigations such as blood tests, ECG and relevant neurological investigations

How this might be tested in MRCGP

AKT

- Symptoms of schizophrenia
- Increased health risks of atypical antipsychotic drugs
- Cognitive behavioural therapy in anxiety management

RCA

- Woman has ongoing abdominal pain and the gastroenterology letter you have received indicates no organic cause
- Young mother is worried by thoughts that TV and radio presenters are talking about her, despite acknowledging that this cannot logically be the case
- Teenager asks for help with compulsive tidying which takes hours at a time and is interfering with his schoolwork.

WPBA

- Log entry reflecting on the implications of a rejected referral to mental health services when there are serious concerns about the patient's mental state
- History taking with a patient requesting more sleeping pills.

How to learn this topic

This section describes *examples* of opportunities for learning.
We recognise that Covid-19 restrictions have significantly affected their accessibility



**Other relevant specialties:
Medicine/Geriatrics/ Old Age
Psychiatry**

- Co-morbidity
- Adults with incapacity
- Overdose
- CAMHS
- Mother and Baby Unit
- Genetic disorders
- Dementia

Acute

- Assessing suicide risk
- Management of -
 - aggression
 - alcohol/drug withdrawal
- acute psychosis
- panic attack puerperal psychosis
- Drug overdose
- Use of emergency sedation
- Mental State Assessment
- Delirium

Primary Care

- Day to day practice
- OOH
- Forensic medical examiners
- Community drug and alcohol centres
- Specialist clinics
- Secure environments
- Sex workers clinic
- Homeless practice

Core Themes

- **Communication and Consultation** - determining competency, history taking with depressed patients and patients with learning disability, patient centred
- **Prescribing** - evidence based, drug interactions including adverse interactions, compliance, anti-psychotics and monitoring requirements, emergency sedation
- **Co-morbidity** - with physical illness
- **Teamworking** - across health and social care, discharge planning/MDT
- **Ethical and medico-legal** - capacity, consent, confidentiality, fitness to drive, mental health act issues

Tips

- Audit
- Significant Event Analysis
- Clinical governance
- Risk Assessment
- Dr as teacher
- Leadership
- BNF
- NICE guidelines

Community/MDT

- Forensic issues, Police, addiction counsellors, CPN, Clinical psychologists
- OOH community psychiatric services
- Detox/rehab services
- Alcoholics Anonymous
- Turning point

