



The Royal
Australian &
New Zealand
College of
Psychiatrists



Certificate of Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry

Adult Psychiatry Curriculum

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Preface

Each of the roles of the Specialist in Adult Psychiatry is first defined and then elaborated using attitude, knowledge and skills based learning objectives.

Medical expert/clinical decision-maker

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry possess a defined body of knowledge and skills that are used to collect and interpret data, make appropriate clinical decisions, and carry out diagnostic and therapeutic interventions for the benefit of the adult population suffering from mental illness and mental health disorder.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- a. They operate within a community in partnership with people with mental health problems and mental illness, their General Practitioners, their carers, community agencies and other health care and social service providers.
- b. Comprehensive and integrated assessment and management services are necessary to facilitate continuity of care, prevent relapse and promote recovery and rehabilitation.
- c. They constitute a valuable and limited resource that should be used efficiently and effectively so as to improve the mental health of the adult population suffering from mental illness and mental health disorder.
- d. They should be responsive to the needs of and accountable for their practice to the community within which they work.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. The epidemiology of mental illness and mental health disorder within the adult population.
- b. The impact of mental illness and mental health disorders within the adult population and on the broader community.
- c. The impact of co-morbidity on adults suffering from mental illness and mental health disorders.
- d. The unique expectations, needs and challenges people face from late adolescence to early old age.
- e. The importance of mental health promotion and prevention of mental illness and mental health disorder within the adult population.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Recognize the presentation of mental illness and mental health disorder within members of the adult population even in the presence of co-morbid conditions, and in people with mental health problems and mental illness with diverse social, cultural and spiritual backgrounds.
- b. Respond to the needs of adults suffering from mental illness and mental health disorders in a timely manner with higher-level assessment skills and a range of efficient and effective evidence based interventions.
- c. Access and apply a broad base of evidence to the care of people with mental health problems and mental illness across the spectrum of health care settings, identify gaps in knowledge and expertise around a clinical or research question and formulate and execute a plan to fill those gaps.
- d. Establish and maintain a system of risk management in association with people with mental health problems and mental illness, their carers, other health professionals and community agencies.
- e. Recognize the boundaries of their own expertise and the need to collaborate with colleagues and other health care professionals.

- f. Demonstrate medical expertise in situations other than in direct care of people with mental health problems and mental illness, such as acting as an expert witness, writing reports and teaching.
- g. Demonstrate understanding and application of mental health legislations.

Communicator

Definition

To provide humane, high-quality care, specialists in Adult Psychiatry establish effective relationships with people with mental health problems and mental illness, other medical practitioners, and other health professionals.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- The need for higher-level interpersonal and communication skills reflects a move away from traditional medical paternalism that emphasizes the clinician's expertise. It thus poses unique challenges for the exercise of appropriate duty of care.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. How to maximize the capacity of people with mental health problems and mental illness to participate actively within the decision making process.
- b. That effective communication can foster satisfaction in and promote collaboration with people with mental health problems and mental illness, as well as influencing the manifestations and outcome of their conditions.
- c. The importance of cooperation and communication among health care professionals involved in the care of people with mental health problems and mental illness, such that the roles of these professionals are delineated and consistent messages are delivered to these people and their families.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Establish a therapeutic alliance with people with mental health problems and mental illness and elicit and synthesize relevant information from them, their family, other health care professionals and community agencies.
- b. Communicate effectively with people with mental health problems and mental illness, their carers, other health care professionals and community agencies to negotiate mutually acceptable management plans that respect their rights and provide them with a range of choices about treatment options, other interventions and supports.
- c. Recognize situations that represent challenges to good communication and use appropriate measures to redress the situation.
- d. Effectively provide information to the general public and media about issues of concern particularly in their role as advocates, promoters of mental health and disease prevention.

Collaborator

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry work in partnership with other mental health and primary care professionals. They must be able to collaborate effectively with people with mental health problems and mental illness, their general practitioners, their carers and a multidisciplinary team of expert health professionals for provision of optimal care, education, and research.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- a. Collaborative practice promotes better outcomes for adults suffering from mental illness or mental health disorders and for their carers.
- b. That effective mental health care requires collaboration between people with mental health problems and mental illness, their carers, mental health professionals, their general practitioners and other health care professionals and other community agencies and that along with other members of the multidisciplinary team the psychiatrist is an essential contributor to this process.
- c. Clinical responsibility does not equate with leadership but rests with every health care professional involved in the care of adults suffering from mental illness or mental health disorder.
- d. The clinical authority, which is vested in the psychiatrist by virtue of training and experience, is enhanced by good teamwork.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. That effective teamwork requires agreed goals, an agreed philosophy of care, effective communication, established ground rules guiding interpersonal behaviour within the team, clear team roles and competent leadership.
- b. The role, expertise and limitations of all members of a multidisciplinary team and how to optimally achieve a goal related to care of people with mental health problems and mental illness, a research problem, an educational task, or an administrative responsibility within the team environment.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Effectively consult and collaborate with other physicians, health care professionals and community agencies.
- b. Develop comprehensive care plans for people with mental health problems and mental illness that they have assessed, including investigation, treatment and continuing care, in collaboration with the members of the multidisciplinary team.
- c. Supervise and support other health care professionals to provide efficient and effective interventions and to advocate for and delineate appropriately co-ordinated clinical care.
- d. Participate in a multidisciplinary team meeting, demonstrating the ability to accept, consider and respect the opinions of other team members, while contributing specialty-specific expertise.
- e. Communicate effectively with the members of a multidisciplinary team in the resolution of conflicts, provision of feedback, and where appropriate, be able to assume a leadership role.

Leader and Manager

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry function as managers when they make everyday practice decisions involving resources, co-workers, tasks, policies, and their personal lives. They do this in the settings of care provision for individual people with mental health problems and mental illness, practice organizations, and in the context of the broader health care system.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- a. An increased focus on working with multidisciplinary teams and in partnerships with people with mental health problems and mental illness, their carers and other health professionals has increased the demand for psychiatrists to demonstrate leadership in advocating for mental health within the broad health system, influencing the multidisciplinary team and facilitating appropriately coordinated clinical care.
- b. Psychiatrists must demonstrate skills in leadership and management in order to be influential at this broader systems level.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. The basic competencies required in management roles.
- b. The national health policy framework within which psychiatry and mental health services are delivered, including the structure, financing and function of the health care system ranging from individual clinical practices to organizations at local, regional and national levels.
- c. The opportunities and challenges within management roles for clinicians, which differ from clinical roles.
- d. Funding models for mental health from more than one frame of reference.
- e. Organisational change theory and how it can be applied to mental health services.
- f. How Quality Improvement activity might work in a service setting
- g. How to increase the engagement of people with mental health problems and mental illness in mental health services.
- h. How to apply adult learning concepts to the management of career transitions and the stresses inherent in undertaking management and leadership roles for psychiatrists.
- i. The structure, financing and function of the health care system ranging from individual clinical practice to organizations at the local, regional and national level.
- j. Population-based approaches to mental health care and their implication for practice in Adult Psychiatry.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Function effectively within the broader health care system and play an active role in its change whilst working effectively and efficiently within a complex health care organization.
- b. Make clinical decisions and judgments based on sound evidence for the benefit of individual people with mental health problems and mental illness, and the population served. This allows for an advocacy role primarily for the individual but also in the context of societal needs when monitoring and allocating needed resources efficiently and effectively.
- c. Participate in planning, budgeting, evaluation and outcome measurement of mental health service developments.
- d. Utilize time and resources effectively to balance care of people with mental health problems and mental illness, earning needs, outside activities, and personal life.

Health Advocate

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry recognize the importance of advocacy activities in responding to the challenges represented by those social, environmental, and biological factors that determine the health of people with mental health problems and mental illness and of society.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- a. Mental health advocacy is an essential and fundamental component of health promotion that can occur at the level of individual people with mental health problems and mental illness, the practice population, and the broader community.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. The multiple bio-psycho-social and cultural determinants of health in the adult population suffering from mental illness and mental health disorder.
- b. Public mental health policy, how policy is developed; current policies that affect mental health either positively or negatively and how policy can be changed as a result of actions by Specialists in Adult Psychiatry.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Identify the bio-psycho-social and cultural determinants of health that affect people with mental health problems and mental illness so as to be able to effectively contribute to improving individual and societal health.
- b. Recognize and respond to those situations in which advocacy on behalf of people with mental health problems and mental illness, professions, or society is appropriate.
- c. Act as health advocates by assessing and optimising the *individual's* ability to access appropriate treatment and support, by working with community groups to identify and apply knowledge about mental health promotion and prevention to 'at risk' groups within a *practice population*, and by contributing to the debate within the *general community* regarding changes to the broader health care system and recognizing how these changes might affect mental health outcomes.

Scholar

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry engage in a lifelong pursuit of mastery of their domain of professional expertise. Through their scholarly activities they contribute to the appraisal, collection, and understanding of adult mental health care knowledge, and facilitate the education of their students, people with mental health problems and mental illness, and others.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize that:

- a. A commitment to continuing education and professional development is necessary to manage the burgeoning knowledge within Adult Psychiatry.

Knowledge

Advanced Trainees in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. The principles of adult education and their relevance to continuing medical education and the education of themselves and other health care professionals.
- b. The principles of medical informatics and how to access relevant evidence in order to optimise care of people with mental health problems and mental illness, continuing medical education and other activities.
- c. The strengths and weaknesses of the current evidence base within adult psychiatry.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to apply the principles of adult learning by developing, implementing, and documenting a personal continuing education strategy.
- b. Apply the principles of critical appraisal to sources of medical information and incorporate this into clinical decision-making.
- c. Demonstrate an understanding of preferred learning methods whilst facilitating the education of people with mental health problems and mental illness, students, trainees, and other health professionals in a range of contexts.

Professional

Definition

Specialists in Adult Psychiatry have a unique societal role as professionals with a distinct body of knowledge, skills, and attitudes dedicated to improving the health and well-being of adults suffering from mental illness and mental health disorders.

Attitudes

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry should recognize:

- a. The need to practice medicine in an ethically responsible manner that respects the medical, legal and professional obligations of belonging to a self-regulating body and is dedicated to delivering the highest quality care with integrity, honesty, and compassion.

Knowledge

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry understand:

- a. The professional, legal and ethical codes by which they are bound.
- b. The importance of balancing personal and professional roles and responsibilities.

Skills

Trainees in Advanced Training in Adult Psychiatry are able to:

- a. Evaluate their abilities, knowledge and skills and know the limitations of their professional competence whilst using appropriate strategies to maintain and advance professional competence.
- b. Adopt specific strategies to heighten personal and professional awareness, maintain appropriate boundaries and explore and resolve interpersonal difficulties in interpersonal and professional relationships.
- c. Understand and apply relevant legislation that relates to the health care system in order to guide one's clinical practice, particularly with reference to the use of the Mental Health Act, guardianship legislation and child protection legislation.
- d. Recognize, analyse and attempt to resolve in clinical practice ethical issues such as involuntary treatment, truth telling, competency, informed consent, confidentiality, conflict of interest, resource allocation and research ethics.

Revision Record Footer

Contact: Education and Training			
Date	Version	Approver	Description
17/02/2016	4	SATAP	Curriculum reviewed and updated to 2012 Fellowship Program.
2019			NEXT REVIEW