UNIT 2: Problems, disorders and populations

MODULE: Older Adults

Module co-ordinator: Adrian Leddy

2017-2018 (2015 Cohort)
Aims and learning objectives of the module:

The Older Adults module will be taught at the beginning of the second year. The teaching will be integrated with relevant sessions from other modules (e.g. neuropsychology and core competencies). The module aims to equip trainees with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with individuals and with carers and other professionals. By the end of the module, trainees will be able to:

- recognise and address discriminatory attitudes and practices;
- assess the needs and preferences of older people;
- formulate problems taking account of an individual's physical health, disabilities, sensory difficulties and experience of health services;
- assess and intervene with mental health problems typically found in this population;
- understand factors that promote successful ageing and consider psychological issues related to end of life care.

- Are able to recognise and address discriminatory attitudes and practices.
- Are able to assess the needs and preferences of individual older people.
- Can formulate problems taking account of an individual's physical health, sensory impairment, disability and experience of health services into their routine practice.
- Are able to assess and intervene at the appropriate level with the main mental health problems occurring in older people.
- Have the knowledge and ability to promote healthy lifestyles and successful aging in later life.

- Are able to recognise and manage the effects of differences in age between Psychologist and older people particularly in the implementation of psychological therapies.
- Are able to encourage and support older people, their carers, and staff to increase autonomy, choice, and psychological well-being.
- Are able to demonstrate cultural sensitivity, and address culture specific expectations of ageing.
- Are able to effectively communicate with older people. Able to overcome cognitive and sensory impairments to enable effective work to take place.
- Are able to determine psychological formulations for older people with complex, multiple problems. For example, clients with co-existing dementia, depression, social isolation, substance abuse, and poverty.
- Are able to recognise and manage risk in older people.
- Have a basic knowledge of the range of services and agencies available for older people and how to access them.
- Are able to work effectively with other providers of services for older people to address psychological aspects of health and health care.
- Able to understand issues related to psychological needs in end of life care for both patients and their carer’s.
- Are able to recognise and manage boundary issues when working with older people in different settings, e.g. patients’ homes, medical wards.
Introduction to the Older Adult module
This is a 30 minute introduction to the Older adult module, providing an overview of the learning aims and the lectures within this module. This is delivered on the same morning as the lecture on Gerontology and contemporary understandings of ageing below.

1. Gerontology and contemporary understandings of the experience of ageing (half day)
   Introduction to the theories of normal ageing
   Demographics and ageing population
   Learning about the main theorists in this area and their cross-collaborations
   How these theories are put into practice clinically
   Exploring a scientifically driven conceptual approach to augmenting CBT with older people.
   Considering how these ideas inform other psychotherapeutic modalities.
   This session sets the backdrop for a later workshop on CBT with Older People

2. Research with Older Adults (1 hour)
   Introduction to ageing population
   Main mental health problems in older adults
   Clinical research as model to improve patient care and disease knowledge
   Dementia as a model for clinical research in older adults
   Applying scientific thinking to the clinical symptomology in dementia patients
   Using clinical experience and impressions to foster research ideas and studies in older adults
   Translation of clinical thinking into a research study and vice versa
   Steps for good study design and publication of clinical research findings

3. CBT with Older People (full day)
   Late life depression and anxiety can be treated effectively with evidence-based psychological interventions. However, older people can face barriers in accessing services for a range of reasons, including their own beliefs and assumptions of ageing and values as well as those of the service and clinician.
   CBT is particularly appropriate as an intervention for older people as it is skills enhancing, present-oriented, problem-focused, straightforward to use and effective.
   While depression in later life is often misunderstood as a ‘natural’ consequence of challenges and losses faced by older people, this unhelpful belief in therapists negates efficacious therapeutic outcomes as therapy becomes unfocused, passive and less effective.
   In this workshop, CBT is augmented with applied gerontological theories in order to enhance outcome.

4. Lived experience (one hour and 45 minutes)
   Two separate sessions by older adults
   First is an older adult describing their experience of typical ageing
   This will aim to dispel myths around depression or anxiety being a typical consequence of ageing
   Transitions in older adulthood
Living with isolation, change in meaning/values, physical health
This should tie in with Gerontology research and Ken Laidlaw's
introductory lecture to this area.
Second session is presented by a person misdiagnosed with
dementia
This will cover the experience of receiving a diagnosis
The implications this causes such as the loss of personhood
Reactions of professionals and family labelling all behaviours as
part of dementia.
Developing an understanding of how to talk and communicate in a
meaningful and inclusive way with people with dementia

Carers of older adults (one hour)
- Understanding the role of carers of older people with a
  range of mental health difficulties
- Understanding and awareness of the issues of burden and
  psychological distress/well being in unpaid carers
- Recent research developments by the presenter on their
  research in this area

4. Personhood and other models for understanding dementia
   (full day)
   - Kitwood’s theory of personhood
   - Newcastle model
   - Clare and woods etc
   - Spector’s approach for CST
   - Formulation
   - Psychological approaches to working with dementia
   - Origins of and an introduction to Cognitive Stimulation
     Therapy
   - Experiential workshop exploring the use of life story books
     with dementia suffers
   - Gaining an understanding of the theory behind reminiscence
     and life storywork,
   - Understanding life storybooks as an organisational
     approach to achieving systemic change for people with
dementia.

5. Diagnostic counselling for dementia: Perspectives from a
   professional and a carer (half day)
   - To understand the concepts of pre- and post-diagnostic
     counselling in relation to neuropsychological assessment of
     older adults.
   - To understand how providing feedback from a
     neuropsychological assessment can be a therapeutic
     experience.
   - To gain an understanding of the impact of the diagnostic
     process on the individual and the carer.
   - To explore the issues regarding the process of sharing a
     diagnosis of dementia.
   - To practice pre-diagnostic counselling skills and to reflect on
     the experience from different perspectives (professional,
     service user, family carer).
   - Pre-diagnostic practice in neuropsychological assessment
     for dementia including guidance from FPOP
   - Research evidence on the impact of receiving a diagnosis
   - A carer’s experience of receiving a diagnosis (presented by
     a local carer)
   - Good practice - sharing a diagnosis
   - Reactions to diagnosis
   - Use of post-diagnostic counselling in groups
6. Bereavement (half day)
- An exploration of the main theories and models used in the bereavement literature to include an experiential session with video/dvd and case examples to illustrate the models and people’s reactions.
- Clinical vignettes and brief formulation of these.
- Time for discussion and reflection on the wider loss experience and the possible influence on the individual or staff members.

7. Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (half day)
- Learning objectives requested

Teaching sessions from other modules which have significant content related to older adults all in Years

COGNITIVE ANALYTIC THERAPY
YEAR 2
CAT and working with older adults (Half day)
To think clinically about adapting the CAT model to work directly and indirectly with older adults
Difficulties that might be experienced in using the CAT model with older adults
To practice formulation and interventions skills with this client group

SYSTEMIC PRACTICE
YEAR 2
Working systemically within older adult services (half day)

Exploration of systemic ideas when working with older adults.
Applying systemic theory to an older adult population
Developments in systemic working with older adults
Working with different generations
A workshop based session using case materials

NEUROPSYCHOLOGY
YEAR 2
Neuro assessment of dementia (full day)
Introduction to different types of dementia
Neuroanatomy
Focus on four subtypes most likely to see on placement (Alzheimer’s disease, Vascular dementia, Dementia with Lewy Bodies, Frontotemporal dementia)
Introduction to rarer dementias (PSP, Corticobasal degeneration, CJD, etc)
Neurocognitive profiles
Case examples of differential diagnoses

Psychological support following stroke (half day)
Introduction to stroke
Brain localisation and impact upon physical and cognitive functioning
Psychiatric diagnoses following stroke
Post stroke depression
Evidence for therapies
Psychological support after stroke (case example, psychological impact of stroke, clinical psychology input, stepped care in stroke psychology)

Additional Learning Resources
Trainees are advised to watch the film Iris. This is about the novelist Irish Murdoch who developed Alzheimer’s disease. It
reflects the perspective of both Iris as the sufferer and her husband struggling to cope as her carer. It provides a helpful insight to the lived experience of carers of people with dementia. Furthermore, there is a documentary released three years ago that is relevant to dementia locally. Called “Remember me”, it was produced in collaboration with Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation trust which documents patient and carer experience of dementia from the point of diagnosis onwards.

An interesting, novel way to challenge potential beliefs about ageing would be to spend time in small groups researching positive examples of ageing. On placement as trainees you will largely be working with older adults who might hold strong and unhelpful beliefs about ageing. These beliefs could form cognitions driving a depressed presentation. Staff who have little prior experience of working with older adults can often get drawn in to this “understandability phenomenon” believing that these factors are inevitable and just a normal part of ageing. However, this is a different experience to the majority of older adults. Two examples from divergent arenas of life include: Fauja Singh who ran his first marathon at the age of 81 and ran his last one aged 101; Hedda Bolgar a psychonalayst who still treated patients four days a week until she was 102 years old. In this session you need to research and find other examples of positive ageing. Following this, there has to be a discussion about the examples you have found as a wider group, reflecting on how it might have challenged your own perceptions of ageing and your feelings of working with this population. How could you use what you have learnt on placement when a client (or a colleague) tells you that their age is a barrier to progress?

**Key References:**


Trainees are also directed towards the Faculty of Psychology of Older People (FPOP) which is a branch of the BPS and is particularly active in the East Anglia region.


The teaching on this module will contribute to trainees learning the following standards of proficiency in line with the HCPC (2015) standards:

1. Be able to practice safely and effectively within their scope of practice
2. Be able to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession
3. Be able to maintain fitness to practice
4. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement
5. Be aware of the impact of culture, equality and diversity on practice
6. Be able to practice in a non-discriminatory manner
7. Understand the importance of and be able to maintain confidentiality
8. Be able to communicate effectively
9. Be able to work appropriately with others
10. Be able to reflect on and review practice
11. Be able to assure the quality of their practice


13. Understand the key concepts of the knowledge base relevant to their profession

14. Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice

15. Understand the need to establish and maintain a safe practice environment

**BPS (2015) competencies covered in the teaching on this Module:**

1. Psychological Assessment
2. Psychological Formulation
3. Psychological Intervention
4. Evaluation
5. Research
6. Personal and professional skills and values
7. Communication and teaching
8. Organisational and systemic influence and leadership