

## Psychiatric history Guide

Brief introduction - demographics

Presenting complaint - agree a problem list if necessary

History of presenting complaint

- Open question - How are you? What has been happening to you? Can you tell me more about this?
- Onset - When did this start?
- Progression - Has it gotten worse?
- Triggers - May anything have caused it to start?
- Description - Who, what, where, when, why?
- Symptoms
- Severity - I can see this is really troubling you. How is it affecting your life?

ICE - Ideas, Concerns, Expectations

- What do you think is going on?, Do you have any concerns?, Is there anything you would like to discuss?

Diagnostic questions - discussed below

Rest of the history

- Past Psychiatric history
  - *Sections*
  - *Self-harm*
  - *Use of mental health services*
- Past Medical/Surgical history
- Drug history
  - *Including psychiatric drugs*
  - *Compliance/Side effects*
  - *Allergies*

- **Family history**
  - *Psychiatric disease*
  - *Neurological disease*
  - *Crime*
  - *Alcoholism*
  
- **Personal history**
  - **Birth and development - difficulties with labour/pregnancy? Slow development?**
  - **Childhood - traumatic/significant life events? At home with parents and siblings? Trouble during school - trouble with school work, bullying, suspension, problem with making friends?**
  - **Later life**
    - **Stressful life events? Work and finance issues? Relationship and sexual issues? Housing? Do they have any children?**
  
- **Social history**
  
- **Forensic history**
  
- **Risk assessment - risk to self, to others and from others. Are they safe?**

## **Diagnostic questions - Low mood**

HPC:

2      References: Focused history taking (Master pass), NICE CKS, OSCE stop

- **Core symptoms of depression**
  - *Low mood - How have you been feeling recently? Felt low in yourself? How long for?*
  - *Lack of pleasure (anhedonia) - Have you felt little interest or pleasure in doing things?*
  - *Low energy - Have you energy levels been low or have you been more tired?*
  
- **Other symptoms**
  - *Sleep - Are you getting enough sleep? Do you wake up early?*
  - *Appetite - Has your appetite changed? Has your weight changed?*
  - *Focus - Are you able to concentrate when doing a task?*
  - *Effect on work, hobbies, relationships, libido?*
  - *Preoccupied with guilt, regret, worthlessness, hopelessness?*
  - *Previous episodes and triggers*
  
- **Co-morbid disorders**
  - *Anxiety, Mania (elated mood and energy, thought disorder and psychosis)/Hypomania (milder but little functional impairment and no psychosis) , Psychosis (hallucinations.delusions)*

Psychiatric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Depression</li> <li>- Bipolar</li> <li>- Adjustment disorder</li> <li>- Psychotic depression</li> <li>- Postnatal depression</li> <li>- Schizoaffective disorder</li> </ul>
Organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hypothyroidism</li> <li>- Substance misuse</li> <li>- Medication side effects - Beta blockers</li> <li>- Intracranial lesion</li> <li>- Dementia</li> </ul>
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sleep disorders</li> <li>- Grief</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions – Anxiety

HPC:

- **Description**

3 References: Focused history taking (Master pass), NICE CKS, OSCE stop

- **What are your worries or anxieties or phobias? Are you always anxious or does it happen at certain times/attacks?**
- **Duration, Onset, Frequency, Triggers/Causes**
- **Severity - How has it affected your life?**
- **How do you manage it?**
- **Mood and thought**
  - **Tense, agitated, fear of loss of control, dread, irritability, decreased concentration, depersonalisation and derealisation, obsessions and compulsions**
  - **Depression screen**
- **Panic attacks**
  - **Have you had any previous attacks? Can you describe these for me please?**
  - **How long does it last for?**
  - **Physical symptoms**
    - **Sweating, tremor, palpitations, dry mouth, pain, dizziness, breathlessness, headache, insomnia, GI symptoms - nausea and vomiting, bowel and urinary changes, decreased appetite, globus, hyperventilation**

Psychiatric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generalised anxiety disorder</li> <li>- Panic disorder</li> <li>- Phobic disorder</li> <li>- Post-traumatic stress disorder</li> <li>- Obsessive compulsive disorder</li> <li>- Depression</li> </ul>
Organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hyperthyroidism</li> <li>- Substance misuse: e.g alcohol withdrawal</li> <li>- Hypoglycemia</li> <li>- Medication side effects - Beta blockers</li> <li>- Intracranial lesion</li> <li>- Dementia</li> <li>- Cardiogenic causes: Angina, ACS, AF</li> </ul>
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sleep disorders</li> <li>- Grief</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions – Psychosis

HPC:

- **Have you seen or heard things that you could not explain?**
- **Have you had any strange or unusual experiences?**

- When did you first notice this? How has it progressed? How has it impacted your life?
- Any prodrome symptoms - poor self care, decrease in function (work or studies)
- Thoughts
  - *Do you feel as if thoughts are being put into your head (insertion)/taken out of your head (withdrawal)/overheard by others (broadcasting)?*
  - *Does the patient stop in their thoughts/when speaking? (Blocking)*
- Delusions (false beliefs unchanged by evidence)
  - *Do you feel as if someone is out to get you/spying on you? (Persecutory)*
  - *Do you feel as if your skin is infested? (Infestation)*
  - *Do you feel that the TV/radio/newspaper talk about you? (Reference)*
  - *Do you feel your own thoughts/feelings/actions are controlled by others? (Control/Passivity)*
  - *Do you feel as if you have special powers/abilities that others don't have? (Grandiose)*
  - *Do you feel as if your rotting away? (Nihilistic)*
- Hallucinations (sensation without stimulus)
  - *Auditory - Do you hear voices?*
    - What do they say?
    - Inside or outside your head? (Pseudohallucinations or Hallucinations)
    - Do they talk to you or about you? (2nd or 3rd person)
    - Do they ask you to do thing or is it a running commentary? (3rd person)
  - *Visual - Do you see things others cannot?*
    - Describe it.
    - When did you first notice?
    - How has it progressed?
  - *Gustatory/Olfactory - Have you noticed strange tastes or smells that you cannot explain?*
    - When did you notice this?

- How has it progressed?
- Other symptoms
  - *Low mood, self-neglect, loss of interest, social withdrawal*

Psychiatric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schizophrenia - positive and negative symptoms</li> <li>- Mood disorders: Bipolar, Severe depression, Schizoaffective disorder</li> <li>- Delusional disorder</li> <li>- Transient psychosis</li> </ul>
Organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neurodegenerative: dementia, Parkinson's disease, Medication</li> <li>- Structural: SOL, temporal lobe epilepsy</li> <li>- Acute: Delirium, encephalitis</li> <li>- Endocrine: Hyperthyroidism, postpartum psychosis</li> </ul>
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Steroids, antimalarials</li> </ul>
Recreational drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alcohol and withdrawal (delirium tremens)</li> <li>- Cocaine</li> <li>- Cannabis</li> <li>- Amphetamines</li> <li>- Hallucinogens</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions - Memory loss

HPC:

- How long has it been since she started to forget things?
- How has it progressed? When was it first noticed? When did she notice?
- Cognition

- **Short term memory - Do you have any difficulty remembering names, appointments, dates?**
- **Long-term memory – Can you remember when you got married? What was your first job?**
- **Visuospatial difficulties – Do you have any difficulty recognising places, people or items?**
- **Language – Does she struggle to find the right words when talking?**
- **Changes – Have you noticed any changes in your behaviour or personality?**
  - **Behaviours – irritability, sexual disinhibition, wandering and social withdrawal**
  - **Personality – violence/outbursts, verbal/physical aggression**
- **Other psychiatric diagnoses**
  - **Depression – How has your mood been recently?**
  - **Anxiety – Have you been feeling upset/anxious recently?**
  - **Psychosis – Have you seen or heard things that you could not explain?**
- **Drug history**
  - **Do you take any medication? Do you remember to take them every day?**
- **Family history- Dementia?**
- **Collateral Hx is required and assess cognitive function (e.g. MMSE)**

<b>Dementia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alzheimer's disease - progressive decline, short-term memory loss initially, loss of insight</li> <li>- Vascular dementia - stepwise decline, evidence of a previous stroke or small vessel disease</li> <li>- Lewy body dementia - fluctuating confusion and parkinsonian features, short-term memory often preserved</li> <li>- Frontotemporal Dementia (pick's) - aggression, inappropriate social behavior, emotional blunting, incontinence and speech and language difficulty; tiers</li> </ul>
<b>Delirium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acute confusional state, secondary to an underlying cause eg. infection, drugs (opiates, L-dopa, sedatives, antiepileptics) or withdrawal from alcohol</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Metabolic disturbances</li> <li>- Brain tumor</li> <li>- Parkinson's disease</li> <li>- Depressive pseudodementia</li> <li>- Encephalitis</li> <li>- HIV</li> <li>- Adverse drug effect</li> <li>- Vitamin deficiency</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions – Mania

HPC:

- How have things been recently?
- Elevated/unstable mood
  - *How is your mood on a scale of 1-10? (Euphoria, irritability, lability, periods of elevated and low mood)*
- Elevated energy levels/activity
  - *How are your energy levels? (Extravagance, rapid speech, pressure of speech, increased libido, decreased sleep, poor appetite)*
  - *Do you feel you have special powers that other people do not have? (Grandiosity) - Risk assess*
- Thought disorder
  - *Is the patient very talkative, switching topics mid-conversation etc (flight of ideas, poor concentration, confusion)*



- **Psychosis**
  - *Grandiose delusions and decreased insight. Hallucinations seen in 15% of patients*
- **Hypomania = milder form of all the features mentioned above without the psychosis and little functional impairment**

Psychiatric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mania/Hypomania</li> <li>- Bipolar disorder</li> <li>- Schizoaffective disorder - significant history of manic and depressive episode concurrent with symptoms of schizophrenia</li> <li>- Adjustment disorder - insomnia, poor concentration, avoiding important jobs, skipping school or work, low mood/anxiety in the context of an identifiable stressor</li> </ul>
Organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delirium</li> <li>- Dementia</li> <li>- Hyperthyroidism</li> <li>- Encephalitis</li> </ul>
Drug use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amphetamines, Cocaine, antidepressants (especially Venlafaxine), steroids, L-dopa</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions - Substance/Alcohol misuse

Substance/Alcohol misuse:

- **What, how much, when, where, alone, progression?**
- **Dependency (3 or more of WANTIN)**
  - *Physical Withdrawal symptoms*
  - *Persisting despite Adverse effects*
  - *Neglect of other things*
  - *Tolerance: need more to get the same effects*
  - *Intense desire (craving)*
  - *No control over use in terms of starting, stopping or amount*
- **Harmful use - physical or mental health damage**
- **Acute intoxication - acutely altered consciousness, behaviour, perception, affect, cognition**

**Alcohol misuse :**

- **CAGE questionnaire**
  - *Cut down - Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking*
  - *Annoy - Do people annoy you by criticising your drinking?*
  - *Guilty - Do you feel guilty about your drinking?*
  - *Eye-opener - Do you drink first thing in the morning?*

**Substance/Alcohol misuse:**

- **Affect on life? Relationships, work, family, friends? Driving?**
- **Have they come into problems with the law?**
- **Mood? Psychosis? Infestation?**

<b>Alcohol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Hazardous drinking - consumption that increases risk of harm (stage before harmful drinking)</li><li>- Harmful drinking - drinking that adversely affects physical or mental health</li><li>- Dependency (3 or more of WANTIN)</li></ul>
<b>Substance misuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Injection drug use<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Track marks (injection site), vascular (VTE, thrombophlebitis), Infection (abscesses, endocarditis, hepatitis, HIV)</li></ul></li><li>- Opioid withdrawal<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Increased resp rate, sweating, face (rhinorrhoea, lacrimation, yawning, mydriasis (pupil dilation), abdo pain, later (increased HR, tremor, fever, diarrhoea and vomiting)</li></ul></li><li>- Cannabis<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Paranoid psychosis, formication (sensation of insects crawling on skin), nasal discharge</li></ul></li><li>- Others<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Amphetamines: florid psychosis</li><li>- Hallucinogens: flashbacks</li></ul></li></ul>

## **Diagnostic questions - Eating disorder**

### **HPC:**

- **Can you tell me a bit more about your eating? Why are other people worried?**
- **Typical day - Can you describe what you eat on a particular day?**
- **Bingeing - Do you ever binge on food? How do you feel afterwards?**
- **Onset - How long has this been going on for?**
- **Trigger - Did anything bring it on?**
- **Home environment - how is everything at home?**
- **Physical symptoms - urinary and bowel habits, pains, bleeding?**

### **SCOFF questions:**

- **Do you make yourself Sick?**
- **Do you worry you have lost Control?**
- **Have you put on One stone/6kg in last 3 months?**
- **Do you believe you are Fat even when other thing you are thin?**
- **Does Food dominate your life?**

### **WAIF questions:**

- **Weight - I know this is personal, but can I ask how much you weight?**

- Amenorrhoea - Are your periods regular?
- Induced vomiting - Have you ever made yourself throw up after eating?
- Fear of fatness - How would you feel if you gained weight?

Anorexia nervosa	Bulimia Nervosa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Weight loss by restricting caloric intake, can also be bingeing and purging, vomiting, intense exercise, laxative use</li> <li>■ Underweight (BMI &lt;17.5)</li> <li>■ Distorted body image - think they are fat when they have been told they are thin</li> <li>■ Fear of weight gain</li> <li>■ Endocrine dysfunction - amenorrhoea for 3 months or decreased libido in men</li> <li>■ Other feature - fatigue, arrhythmias due to hypokalemia, psychosexual problems/decreased fertility, constipation, dry skils/fine body hair (Lanugo), osteoporosis</li> </ul> <p>Effects of repeated laxative use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cardiomyopathy</li> <li>■ Oedema</li> <li>■ Metabolic acidosis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Normal weight or overweight (BMI &gt;17.5)</li> <li>■ Binge eating - repetitive episode of eating large amounts of food, irregular eating pattern</li> <li>■ Purging - try to counteract the fattening effect of binge by inducing vomiting, taking laxative, diuretics, extreme dieting, or exercise</li> <li>■ Effects of repeated vomiting - dental enamel erosion, oesophagitis, Russell's sign (tooth mark calluses on back of hands), Metabolic alkalosis and electrolyte changes)</li> <li>■ Preoccupied with weight control</li> <li>■ Endocrine dysfunction - amenorrhoea may occur</li> <li>■ Physical signs and symptoms - fatigue/lethargy, GI (bloating, constipation, abdo pain, gastric dilatation - risk of rupture), occasional swelling of hands and feet, parotid enlargement, tetany</li> </ul>

## Diagnostic questions - Self-harm/suicide attempt

HPC:

- How are you feeling today? I am really sorry it got this bad for you that you felt there was no other way out
  
- Before
  - *Prior events/mood - If you don't mind me asking, what happened before that made you feel like you had to harm yourself/end your life? How long have you been feeling like this?*
  - *Plan - What plans did you make and how long for?*
  - *Not to be caught - Did you try make sure you would not get caught?*
  - *Preparation?*
  - *Did you tell anyone before or seek help afterwards?*
  
- During
  - *Can you tell me exactly what happened?*
  - *Expectations - did you expect to die?*
  - *Alcohol/drug use - Were you taking drugs/alcohol at the time? Under the influence?*
  
- After
  - *Discovery - How were you discovered? Did you tell someone?*
  - *Anger/regret - How do you feel about what happened?*
  - *Lingering thoughts - Do you have any thoughts about doing something like this again?*

## Mental State Assessment

<b>Overview</b>	<b>ABS MAT PCI</b>
<b>Appearance</b>	Age, Race, Self-care
<b>Behaviour</b>	Eye-contact, Abnormal behaviour (too much: disinhibition, over-familiarity; too little: withdrawn, poor eye contact, poor rapport), Signs of distress (agitation, tearful), Abnormal movements (motor slowing observed in depression and schizophrenia; dyskinesia, tremor, catatonia), Was Rapport established
<b>Speech</b>	Quantity, Rate, Volume, Tone, articulation (fluent and smooth, dysarthria, stammer), Abnormalities (slowing, mutism, fast speech, pressured, neologisms/new words, incoherence, echolalia)
<b>Mood (underlying feeling)</b>	Euthymic, Dysphoric/low, Euphoric/Elevated, Angry, Anxious, Apathetic, Irritable. Comment on subjective and objective mood.
<b>Affect (moment-to-moment emotion)</b>	Reactiv (normal), Blunted, Labile. Note if incongruent with their thought content
<b>Thought - content and form</b>	<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hypochondriasis - preoccupation/worries</li> <li>- Obsessions</li> <li>- Overvalued ideas</li> <li>- Delusions (false beliefs despite evidence) - persecutory, reference, grandiose, nihilistic, worthlessness, guilt</li> <li>- Delusional perceptions (false interpretation of real perception)</li> <li>- Thoughts of suicide/self-harm/harm to others/harm from others</li> <li>- Thought insertion, broadcasting, withdrawal, interference</li> </ul> <p>Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flight of ideas (Mania)</li> <li>- Circumstantiality - does not get to point (Mania, OCD, Schizophrenia)</li> <li>- Tangentiality - going off topic (Schizophrenia)</li> <li>- Perseveration - repeating words/phrases/gestures when the appropriate stimulus has stopped e.g. using same answer for different questions) (Organic, Schizophrenia)</li> <li>- Loosening of association (derailment/knight's move thinking - jump between thoughts; thought blocking - stop mid thought; word salad - unintelligible mix of words) (Schizophrenia)</li> </ul> <p>If none - 'No formal thought disorder'</p>
<b>Perception</b>	<p>Hallucinations (sensation without stimulus)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Auditory - Inside or outside head (Pseudohallucinations or Hallucinations), Talk to them or about them (2nd or 3rd person), Running commentary (3rd person)</li> <li>- Visual</li> <li>- Gustatory/Olfactory</li> </ul> <p>Illusion (misperception of real stimulus), Depersonalisation (out of body feeling and derealisation)</p>
<b>Cognition</b>	Orientation in person (their name), place and time Formally assessed using tests such as the Mini Mental State Exam (MMSE)
<b>Insight</b>	Realise their experience is (1) Abnormal, (2) Due to illness, (3) Requires help (Hospital, Specialist, or Medication)