

Course ID: CMEC10

Liaison psychiatry: Identifying and treating psychiatric problems in a medical population

Course director: Francis Creed

Educational Objectives: To enable psychiatrists to establish a procedure so that a hierarchy of psychiatric problems is established within medical populations. This will ensure that the most needy receive treatment and appropriate patients are referred to psychiatric services.

Course description: It is well recognised that up to a quarter of patients attending general medical facilities have anxiety or depressive disorders. These disorders lead to an impaired outcome of the treatment of the medical disorder.

Identification of psychiatric disorders in the medical population: the participants will learn the strengths and weaknesses of using a screening instrument to detect psychiatric disorders in medical populations. The results of two phase surveys will be demonstrated. A practical method of identifying patients who need treatment for anxiety or depressive disorders will be outlined.

Videotapes will be shown to indicate the importance of depressive disorders in medical populations so that participants are aware of the advantages of detecting and treating depressive disorders in this population.

Different modes of referral will be discussed with participants. Methods of audit of this work will be described.

The main format for the audience participation will be a series of small group workshops, which will tackle particular scenarios. These scenarios will be worked out beforehand and will illustrate different aspects of the problem of detecting and treating anxiety and depressive disorders in medical settings.

Target audience: All psychiatrists – general psychiatrists and liaison psychiatrists. The course would also be of interest to psychologists who work in the general medical setting.

Course level: No previous experience or knowledge is required. An understanding of English will be necessary to understand the course.