

Article: 0001

Topic: PL01 - Plenary 01: Excellence in training - What makes a good psychiatrist?

Excellence in Training - What Makes a Good Psychiatrist?

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Psychiatry is part of the medical discipline and a key medical specialty which deals with mental illness and mental, emotional and behavioural disorders in the presence or absence of physical disorders. Psychiatric disorders include a number of problems starting from childhood to older age as well as chronic severe mental illness and common mental disorders and psychiatry of learning disability. Biopsychosocial models of aetiology and management are generally followed. Thus the psychiatrist needs to be aware of medical interventions, social care and psychological therapies along with spiritual and anthropological aspects of care. They may not provide these directly but must be aware of where help should be sought from. There are various models of training and frameworks for what are the roles and responsibilities of psychiatrists. First and foremost psychiatrists need to be clinicians along with abilities to be a professional, have academic abilities, be able to communicate and manage resources. Being a team player is an essential criterion. A good psychiatrist should be able to synthesise all the information including biological, psychological, social and spiritual and cultural factors in making sense of the patient's distress emotional and behavioural experiences. A good psychiatrist can manage uncertainty and deal with ambiguity. They must be able to help patients and their families navigate the complex health care systems. Working with families and working as an advocate for patients and their families is a critical but often unappreciated aspect of the role of the psychiatrist. In these changing times, good psychiatrists will also engage in public mental health agenda.