UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Psychology in Primary Health Care

2526-2-F5107P016

Learning area

Models and techniques for assessing psychological functioning

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding (DdD1)
• Understand the regulatory and professional framework of the Primary Care Psychologist, including its connection with national and international healthcare policies.
• Become familiar with the WHO guidelines and the recommendations included in the Essential Levels of Care (LEA).
• Analyze actions for promoting psychological well-being and for the early identification of psychological distress in the general population.

Applying knowledge and understanding (DdD2)
• Apply psychological assessment techniques and analyze patient needs through clinical interviews and psychodiagnostic tools.
• Design and tailor preventive and supportive interventions based on the specific needs of adults, adolescents, and children.
• Collaborate effectively within multidisciplinary teams, contributing to the construction of integrated care pathways in primary care settings.

Making judgements (DdD3)
• Critically evaluate complex clinical and organizational situations in primary care settings, considering psychological, relational, and institutional factors.
• Formulate intervention hypotheses consistent with scientific evidence, patient needs, and contextual constraints.
• These skills will be developed through class discussions of clinical cases, the analysis of case vignettes, and

individual elaboration of intervention strategies.

Communication skills (DdD4)
• Communicate effectively with patients, family members, healthcare professionals, and fellow psychologists, adjusting communication to the clinical and institutional context.
• Clearly and competently deliver assessment results and intervention proposals, both orally and in writing.
• These competencies will be developed through practical exercises, oral discussions in class, and interview simulations.

Learning skills (DdD5)
• Develop the ability to independently update one's knowledge by critically consulting scientific sources, guidelines, and official documentation.
• Acquire methodological tools to navigate scientific literature and professional resources for clinical practice.
• The course includes guided use of scientific articles, WHO documents, and Moodle-shared materials to foster a reflective and clinically-oriented learning process.

Contents

The course will provide:

1. Theoretical and regulatory elements, including national and international legislation and guidelines, surround the integration of psychology in primary care.
2. Basic skills in prevention, diagnosis, and psychological intervention, focusing on managing psychological well-being and psychodiagnostic assessment in primary care.
3. Elements of preventive intervention design for different age groups and support for caregivers in primary care.
4. Practical knowledge for working in multidisciplinary teams through the collaborative care model.
5. References to best practices and the professional boundaries of the psychologist in primary care, with an evidence-based approach.

Detailed program

1. Regulatory framework:
o National and international legislation on psychology in primary care.
o WHO guidelines and Essential Levels of Care (LEA).

2. Design of preventive interventions:
o Principles of support and counseling interventions.
o Designing interventions for adults, adolescents, and children.
o Support for caregivers and rehabilitation/individual treatment plans.

3. Patient assessment and demand analysis:
o Theory and techniques of clinical interviewing.
o Psychodiagnostic assessment.
o Principles of psychopathology, clinical psychology, and rehabilitation psychology.

4. Support interventions:
o Principles of support and counseling interventions.
o Involvement of the patient and their family.

o Referral to specialist services.

5. Team management:
o Integration with other health professionals.
o The collaborative care model: multidisciplinary teams in action.

6. Specific knowledge:
o Professional boundaries of the psychologist.
o Physical health and psychological health.
o Diagnostic challenges and differential diagnosis.
o Best practices in clinical prevention projects.
o Evidence-based approaches in primary care.
o Training and education in primary care.

Prerequisites

There are no specific prerequisites.

Introductory clinical psychology and psychodiagnostic knowledge are recommended (but optional). However, the lecturer will be available during office hours to clarify and provide background material for students who need additional support.

Teaching methods

Approximately 65% of the lessons will be delivered in a traditional lecture format in person. The remaining portion will be conducted interactively in person (presentation of case studies from various contexts of prevention, diagnosis, and intervention to illustrate the topics covered, promote practical application of the knowledge acquired, and include practical exercises, both individual and in small groups). Throughout the course, supplementary materials (scientific articles, literature reviews) will be provided.

These methods aim to make the course content more accessible and facilitate the acquisition of specific skills related to psychological work in primary care, while enabling a thorough understanding of its characteristics, processes, and clinical applications with diverse populations.

Most of the material used in class (excluding videos) will be made available on the course’s e-learning platform.

Assessment methods

The exam will consist of a written test (multiple-choice questions) and a mandatory oral exam covering the entire course bibliography and materials. There are no midterm assessments. The written exam will primarily assess theoretical knowledge, while the oral exam will also focus on evaluating the ability to analyze the concepts discussed critically.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

- M. Liuzzi (2016), “La psicologia nelle cure primarie. Clinica, modelli di intervento e buone pratiche”, Il Mulino.
- Clerici, C. A., & Veneroni, L. (2014). La psicologia clinica in ospedale. Consulenza e modelli d’intervento. Milano: FrancoAngeli.
- Extra materials provided in class (slides, scientific articles).

Although this course is in Italian, Erasmus students may contact the professor to discuss taking the exam in English.

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING