Knowledge and understanding of mental health presentations

Basic knowledge about mental health

An ability to draw on knowledge that mental health problems can affect people of any age, class, ethnicity, religion or socio-economic status	
An ability to draw on knowledge that mental health problems and substance misuse (including alcohol) are a leading cause of disability	
An ability to draw on knowledge that mental health problems are important risk factors for physical illnesses, as well as unintentional and intentional injury	
An ability to draw on knowledge that mental health problems can disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others, daily functioning and quality of life	
An ability to draw on basic knowledge of the prevalence of mental health problems, for example that:	
	every year, about one in four people experience a mental health problem (most frequently depression and anxiety disorders (with mixed anxiety and depression the commonest presentation)
	bipolar disorder and psychosis are relatively uncommon presentations, but can be associated with significant additional health problems (especially if a person is not receiving treatment)
An ability to draw on basic knowledge of the symptoms and difficulties in functioning that characterise common mental health problems	
An ability to draw on knowledge of the distinction between mental health problems and learning disabilities (the former affects a person's thinking, mood and behaviour, whereas people with learning disabilities experience limitations in intellectual function and difficulties with certain skills)	

Knowledge of mental health presentations

During assessment and when carrying out interventions, an ability to draw on knowledge of common mental health problems and their presentation
An ability to draw on knowledge of the factors associated with the development and maintenance of mental health problems
An ability to draw on knowledge of the usual symptoms associated with common mental health problems
An ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which mental health problems can impact on functioning (e.g. maintaining intimate, family and social relationships, or the capacity to maintain employment and study)
An ability to draw on knowledge of the impact of impairments in functioning on mental health
An ability to draw on knowledge of mental health problems to avoid escalating or compounding the client's condition when their behaviour leads to interpersonal difficulties that are directly attributable to their mental health problem

Help-seeking and treatment

An ability to draw on knowledge that fear (and sometimes experience) of stigma and discrimination can prevent people from seeking mental health care, and:	
	an ability to draw on knowledge that only about one in eight people experiencing mental health problems receive active treatment
An ability to draw on knowledge that for most people experiencing mental health problems or suicidal feelings, the initial acknowledgement that they have a problem (and seeking help) is a major life event/transition	

An ability to draw on knowledge that treatments for mental health problems are effective and help to reduce symptoms and improve quality of life	
An ability to draw on knowledge that there are a range of psychological, psychosocial and medical interventions for mental health problems, and that:	
	treatments may be offered independently, sequentially or in combination
	access to treatments in all modalities may be limited by availability and local service provision