Course Objective

Material Covered: The Psychosis/ Schizophrenia curriculum will cover a comprehensive theory and clinical teaching on the Schizophrenia Specialty Unit at HCPC. The topics will include regular lectures on:

1. The concept of psychosis in terms of its symptomatology and epidemiology
2. The pathogenesis of schizophrenia and other psychoses
3. The DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for schizophrenia- its usefulness and limitations
4. Psychodynamic underpinnings of schizophrenia and psychotherapeutic and biological treatment options in psychosis and schizophrenia: Psychotropics and ECT
5. Additional Perspectives in Schizophrenia:
   - Schizophrenia and depression/negative symptomatology in schizophrenia
   - Psychosis in medical illness
   - Psychosis and substance use
   - Schizophrenia and personality
   - Schizophrenia and sleep
   - Schizophrenia and psychoneuroimmunological concepts
   - Schizophrenia and risk of suicide
   - Interface of psychiatric illness (particularly psychosis) and the law
   - Schizophrenia and the importance of early interventions for a better prognosis.
   - Schizophrenia and the importance of understanding the effect of non-adherence with treatment in this patient population and the role of long acting injections/ ACT teams and other step down units.

Skills Acquired: This elective will build upon the MS3 Clerkship clinical exposure the students would have already had at HCPC. This elective will also interest those students who want to achieve interview and rapport building skills with some of the most complex patients they will see in their careers. Students will refine their interviewing and risk assessment skills and learn more about the therapeutic management of psychotic disorders. This elective will also introduce the students to electroconvulsive therapy in patients with psychosis which will help them appreciate the biological underpinnings of this illness. Students will be introduced to the effectiveness of teamwork in treating this devastating illness by working with psychiatry residents, nursing staff, and case managers and understand the importance of involving families in the treatment plans. They will be invited to attend occasional family meetings to see how information is shared between the treatment teams and family members, respecting HIPAA rules.

By the end of this elective the MS4 student should be able to:

- Formulate a differential diagnosis of psychiatric disorders seen in adult psychiatric population at HCPC
- Describe the illness from a perspective of psychodynamic as well as DSM-5 diagnostic criteria.
- Understand the various treatment options available for schizophrenia and psychosis and appreciate the effectiveness of combining these options in an optimal way.
- Understand electroconvulsive therapy as an effective tool in the treatment of treatment resistant psychosis and persistent suicidality
- Appreciate the factors which may influence the disease or the presentation of the illness such as drug and alcohol abuse/ influence of medical illness
- Understand the interface between mental illness, particularly psychosis and the law.
- Perform a thorough risk assessment and risk mitigation in psychosis in regard to self-harm and violence.

Additional Skills Acquired by the Student:

- Perform a comprehensive psychiatric interview to gather clinically relevant information which will allow for a DSM-5 diagnosis of schizophrenia/ psychosis.
- Perform a thorough risk assessment for suicide and violence/homicide risk and to be able to mitigate those risks by advising treatment and other psychosocial interventions.
- Observe an improvement or deterioration of symptoms and take appropriate steps in terms of psychopharmacology/psychology interventions to attain patient stability.
- Address other factors such as drug/alcohol use, insomnia, medical issues which may be interfering and complicating the treatment of schizophrenia
- Interface with medical, nursing and social worker colleagues to build a team network with a single aim of achieving clinical stability in patients.
Activities Of Elective

Number Of New Patients/Student/Week: 8-10

Responsibilities Of Student For Assigned Patients:

- Daily (M-F rounds) at Harris County Psychiatric Center on the Schizophrenia Unit 2C at HCPC.
- Perform initial psychiatric evaluations of patients admitted to the unit and to assist in reviewing other patients.
- Learn the intricacies of psychotropic medication management along with treatment of various symptoms complexes in schizophrenia such as psychosis/ depressed mood/ insomnia/ anxiety.
- Observe electroconvulsive therapy in medication resistant patients as well as in other complex groups of patients such as acute suicidality/ catatonia.
- Opportunities to be a part of research activities in collaboration with BBSB where the instructor (Dr. Omar Pinjari) has some research protocols and ongoing projects.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Observe</th>
<th>Perform</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric Interviewing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electroconvulsive Therapy</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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Does history/physical: Yes
Who critiques: Faculty – Dr. Omar Pinjari
Follows patients, with appropriate notes as needed: Yes
Who supervises: Faculty – Dr. Omar Pinjari
Does student see ambulatory patients: No

Scheduled Duties of Student:

- Frequency of rounds on patients: Monday – Friday
- Presents patients to preceptor or attending physician: X
- Weekly schedule of required teaching sessions: Case conferences/ Grand Rounds/ Journal clubs/ ECT meetings

Describe Optional Rounds And Activities, If Any:

Other Required Activities:

- Reading/review of current literature: Yes
- Writing or presenting a paper: Yes

How Is Student Evaluated:

Written mid-point and final evaluation.

Who Evaluates Students:

Dr. Omar Pinjari

Unique Features Of This Elective:

- To be able to learn in a specialist environment in understanding complex Psychosis/ Schizophrenia
- To learn the psychopharmacological/psychotherapeutic and biological (ECT) treatment interventions
- To be able to appreciate the coordinated effort of various medical and non-medical staff to achieve patient stability
- To be able to appreciate the effect of psychotropic interventions in this patient population, both regular and Long acting injections