

UNIT 1

Introduction to Psychology in Healthcare

Understanding the mind.
Enhancing care.



Mind



Health



Understanding



Care



Psychology Foundations

Psychology scientifically studies behaviour and mental processes, including typical variation and clinically significant difficulty.

What psychology helps us do

- Describe and understand patterns; explain them with evidence and context; estimate probabilities without certainty about an individual; support coping and quality of life.

Four interacting components



- **Mind** — thoughts, beliefs, memories and imagination shape understanding and decisions.



- **Emotions** — joy, sadness, fear, anger and anxiety affect experience and action.



- **Behaviour** — observable actions include speaking, eating, moving, resting and interacting.



- **Mental processes** — attention, learning, memory, reasoning and problem-solving help people use information.



Healthcare connection — illness, treatment, relationships, culture and surroundings influence all four. Behaviour is a clue, not a diagnosis.

Scope and Five Areas of Psychology

Psychology studies people across settings and cultures, including healthcare, education, work, sport and community life.



Healthcare focus – adapt communication; explore beliefs, emotions and barriers; support coping, rehabilitation and health promotion.



The areas connect without rank. Patient-centred care considers physical and social causes too, rather than assuming every difficulty is psychological.

Psychology in Health Sciences and Care Settings

Health reflects interacting biological, psychological, behavioural and social factors.

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1. Understand behaviour — explore beliefs, experience, resources and barriers without blame.
 2. Improve communication — listen, use plain language, check understanding and invite questions.
 3. Manage stress — support patients and staff; refer severe or unsafe distress.
 4. Support mental health — notice concerns, screen only if trained, document and refer; screening is not diagnosis.
 5. Promote healthy living — support realistic activity, nutrition, sleep or smoking-cessation goals.



Across care — hospitals prepare people for procedures; community and primary care support prevention and early help; rehabilitation supports adjustment; palliative care addresses distress, meaning and family needs.

Care can support trust, agreed plans and quality of life without guaranteeing outcomes.

Clinical Psychology: Responsibilities and Role

Clinical psychology serves children, adults and older adults; qualified practitioners work within competence, authorization, local law and a professional relationship.



Four related responsibilities

- Assessment uses interviews, observation and validated tests appropriate for language, culture and disability; screening is not diagnosis.
- Diagnosis or formulation integrates evidence; counselling or psychotherapy supports coping; prevention uses education and early intervention.

Common concerns — anxiety, depression, stress-related disorders, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, behavioural disorders and illness-related adjustment.



Healthcare roles — collaborate with multidisciplinary teams;



support people before and after surgery, with chronic illness or rehabilitation;



help families cope.



Potential benefits include well-being, coping, recovery and quality of life; none is guaranteed.



Testing, diagnosis and psychotherapy require suitable authority.



Severe withdrawal or immediate safety risk needs urgent local escalation.

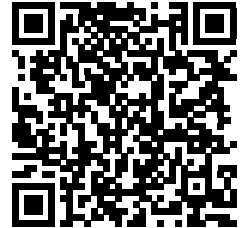


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