

Enhancing communication between community referrers and psychiatrists/psychiatry services workshop – lessons learnt from a community consultation liaison team

Context: Good communication between referrers and psychiatrists/psychiatry services is an integral part of the work of psychiatry.

Objectives: To learn what information to collect prior to referral, what information to provide the referrer and how to involve the patient in the process.

Key Messages: The workshop will focus on three key aspects of communication at the interface between primary care and psychiatry. Firstly, the initial interaction with the referrer; refining the referral question, requesting pertinent information, determining roles and expectations. The second aspect will be on the feedback provided to referrers after a psychiatric assessment has been performed. Particular emphasis will be given to the written communication provided to the referrer; the content, style and purpose of the written communication. The third part of the session will focus on patient perspectives of receiving a copy of the written communication that is sent to the referrer.

The workshop is intended for psychiatrists and psychiatry service staff who work in the community and who interact with community referrers such as general practitioners, community healthcare workers and other primary health care workers

Conclusion: This workshop will focus on a range of strategies to enhance the communication processes between referrers and psychiatrists/psychiatry services.