



From Confusion to Competence: Peer-Led Development of a Psychiatric Interviewing Guide

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Background

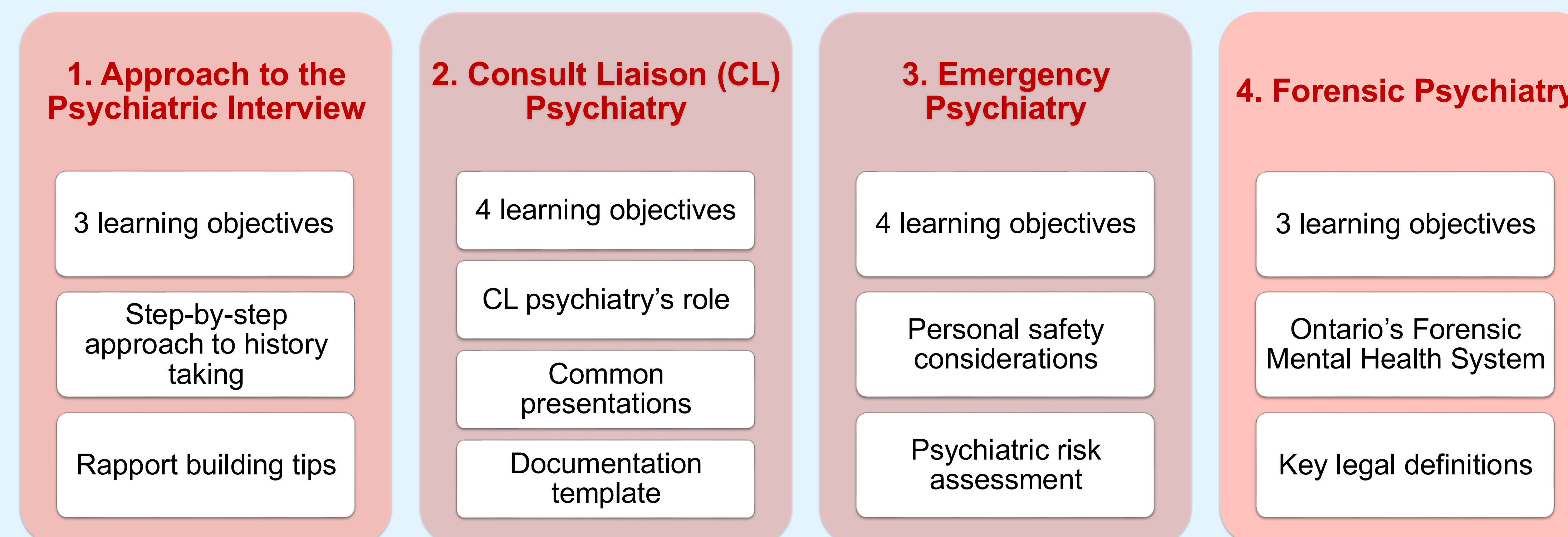
- ❖ Psychiatry clerkship poses several challenges:
 - Integrating diagnostic reasoning with process skills
 - Process skills are inherently difficult to rehearse in pre-clinical settings, leading to their consolidation under real clinical pressure (1,2)
- ❖ The literature shows that targeted learning aids introduced at key transition points can improve interview organization and learner confidence (3)
- ❖ Class of 2026 (2T6) psychiatry clerkship representatives informally surveyed 3rd year clerks at the University of Toronto (U of T), identifying a need for practical resources to support routine clinical encounters
- ❖ This project aims to create resources that facilitate early skills acquisition and bridging of diagnostic reasoning with practical interviewing techniques

Methods

- ❖ A post-rotation needs assessment examined 2T6 clerks' readiness and comfort with psychiatric interviewing, clinical resource use, and areas requiring additional support
- ❖ Based on feedback, 4 Self-Learning Modules (SLMs) were developed using psychiatry clerkship syllabus material and reviewed with U of T psychiatry residents and faculty:
 1. Approach to Psychiatric History-Taking
 2. Considerations for Emergency Psychiatry
 3. Considerations for Consult-Liaison Psychiatry
 4. Considerations for Forensic Psychiatry
- ❖ SLMs included learning objectives, sample clinical questions, subspecialty relevant tips/pearls, and documentation templates

Results

Figure 1: Core content areas of each Self-Learning Module (SLM)



All SLMS were reviewed with the support of 12 U of T faculty psychiatrist from major teaching sites

Figure 2: Preferred SLM formats among 2T6 students (n = 10)

■ PDF/document (SLM-style)
■ Clickable module
■ Short asynchronous videos
■ Embedded in the Psychiatry Clerkship Handbook
■ Template/checklist

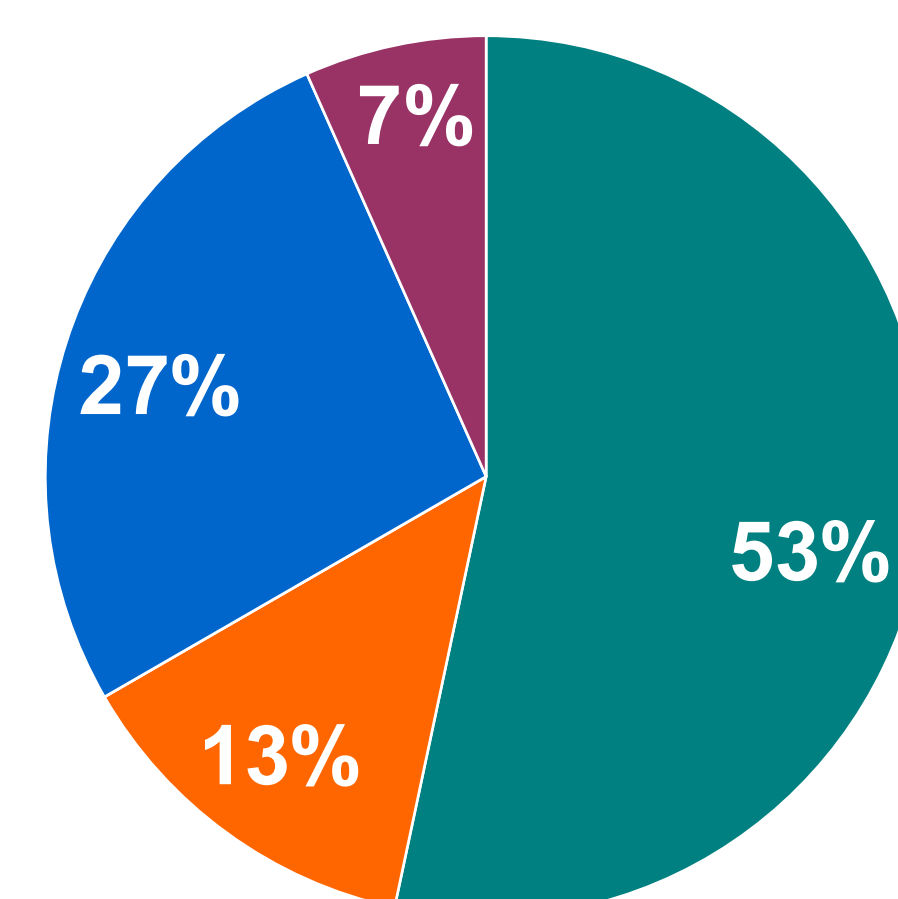
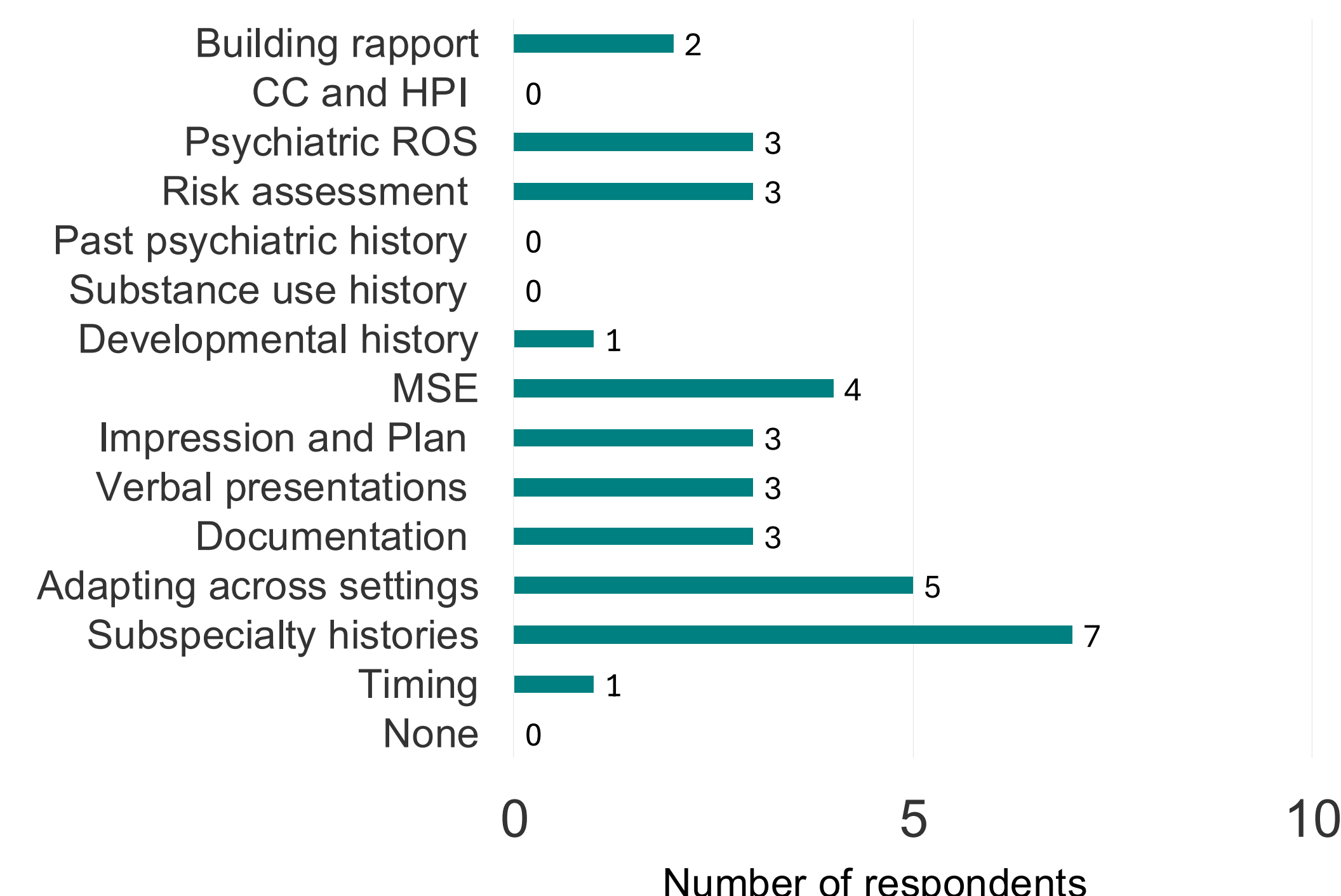


Figure 3: 2T6-reported areas of difficulty in psychiatric history-taking (n=10)



Discussion

- ❖ Findings suggest that 3rd year clerks at U of T would benefit from additional support with the field-specific components of psychiatric interviewing
- ❖ In keeping with students' preference for accessible, self-directed learning formats, resources were created as mobile-friendly PDFs to support quick, point-of-care use between patient encounters and beyond the rotation
- ❖ This project's needs assessment was limited by:
 - A small sample size
 - Reliance on self-reported measures of perceived confidence and preparedness
 - Lack of external measures of performance improvement such as preceptor-rated assessments

Conclusions / Future Directions

- ❖ 4 SLMs have been introduced to U of T's psychiatry clerkship curriculum to provide early guidance on the process demands of psychiatric interviewing
- ❖ Psychiatry clerkship's well-established role in strengthening transferable clinical skills further underscores the value of resources that bridge pre-clinical learning and bedside practice (2)
- ❖ Evaluation data from post-rotation surveys assessing utilization and learner-reported benefits will inform ongoing refinement of the SLMs

References

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