

School or Department: School of Psychology

Unit of study Title: Health Psychology in Clinical Practice

Credit Points: 6

Semester: 1

Lecturer Dr Barbara Mullan

Total Contact Hours: 39 hours staff/student contact

Teaching and Learning Methods: lectures, tutorials

Aims and intended outcomes:

- To conceptually define health within a biopsychosocial framework
- To review major causes of morbidity and mortality
- To consider the opportunities for psychologists to work at individual and community levels to improve health
- To introduce the concepts of prejudice, control and compliance in health care
- To present some of the psychological reactions to hospitalisation, illness and pain
- To demonstrate how psychological research methods, theories, and principles can be applied to enhance biomedical approaches for promoting health and treating illness

Objectives or competencies list:

By the end of this unit of study the student should be able to:

- Recognise a wide range of issues, which fall under the rubric of health psychology
- Demonstrate an understanding of the most important biopsychosocial causal factors in the origins of most common health problems
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of the complex interplay between physical well-being and a variety of biological, psychological, and social factors

- Appreciate gender and cross cultural aspects of health related behaviour and attitudes
- Acquire an understanding of the difficulties patients experience in deciding whether or when to seek treatment for disturbing symptoms
- Evaluate psychological reactions to illness
- Become aware of the experiences of patients in the hospital setting, factors that affect adherence to medical regimens, and sources of problems in patient/practitioner relationships
- Determine how psychological reactions to pain differ and how methods of pain relief can be combined to enhance treatment effectiveness
- Become aware of the impact that disabling or life-threatening illnesses have on patients and their families
- Use subject specific databases and search engines to generate an evidence base

Relationship between Unit of Study and statement of generic attributes of graduates as adopted by the Academic Board:

Information literacy

Gather, interpret and analyse information

Create record and retrieve information

Apply technical and information skills appropriate to their discipline or professional area

Ethical, social and professional understanding

Cultural sensitivity, a respect for multiple points of view

Demonstrate an awareness of the local and global context of their discipline or professional area

Personal and intellectual autonomy

Use initiative and resourcefulness

Problem solving

Manage time and resources effectively

Research and inquiry

Able to gather information systematically from a wide range of sources

Conceptualise problems and formulate a range of solutions;

Work effectively with others

Communication

Ability to work across a variety of situations and with a variety of people

Written and oral presentation skills

Present well-reasoned arguments, using technology as appropriate;

Access, organise and present information, particularly through technology-based activity

Summary of Methods of Assessment

Tutorial attendance and presentation	50%
Major assignment – 2500 word essay	50%

The student will be required to select one essay title from the following.

1. About one third of all deaths could be prevented if people were to change their behaviours. Evaluate the evidence for this assertion.
2. Describe with regard to at least one health-enhancing behaviour how lifespan, cultural and socioeconomic factors influence health behaviours. Make specific reference to the Australian context.
3. What are the potential negative effects of hospitalisation, and how could they be reduced through improved health professional-patient communication?
4. Culture does not influence pain. Discuss.

The essay is due in on the **2/6/9**. Assignment hand in to unit of study coordinator.

It is expected that the majority of reading for this module will be journal based. Guidance in the choice and evaluation of such articles will be provided in the 1st tutorial.

Core Texts Morrison, Bennett, Butow, Mullan & White (2007) *Introduction to Health Psychology in Australia* Pearson Education Ltd Australia

Reading List

- Christensen, A. J., Martin, R. and Morrison Smyth, J. (Eds.) (2004) *Encyclopedia of health psychology*, Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, New York.
- Marks, D. F. (Ed.) (2005) *Health psychology: theory, research and practice*, SAGE, London.
- Michie, S. and Abraham, C. (Eds.) (2004) *Health psychology in practice*, Blackwell Pub., Malden, Mass. ; Oxford.
- Rozensky, R. H. (Ed.) (2004) *Psychology builds a healthy world : opportunities for research and practice*, American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- Suls, J. and Wallston, K. A. (Eds.) (2003) *Social psychological foundations of health and illness*, Blackwell Pub., Malden, MA.

Unit of study Coordinator: Dr B A Mullan

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