

Appendix 10.

**Expert Patient
Programme
Toolkit**

Appendix 10. Crib sheet email sent to students before an EP session

Dear **Student**,

Welcome to your Psychiatry placement! You are booked to take part in an 'Expert Patient' (EP) history-taking communication session at **Date/Time**. This session will be **Online via MS Teams/In Person at the Radbourne Unit**. Please find the link to the meeting below. The purpose of this email is to talk you through a little bit about the session and give you a hint or two as how to approach it.

The first thing to say about the session is, 'don't worry about it'. This is part of your learning process – it is not summative; you have not got to pass it to pass the placement. These EP sessions are an opportunity for you to practice taking a psychiatric history from an 'Expert Patient'. This is a volunteer with lived experience of mental ill health, that has offered to speak to you about their experiences and the impact their diagnosis(es) has had on their life. The session creates a safe space that allows you to practice asking difficult and sensitive questions, explore a person's mental health journey, and get some feedback on how you made them feel during the interview.

If you get chance, as part of this history taking interview you can practice completing a 'Mental State Examination' and safety/risk assessment. Please note that the EP is a patient, not an actor. Please ensure confidentiality in your conversation and also dress as you would think appropriate for a face-to-face patient meeting.

I have attached a 'crib sheet' that may be helpful in guiding you into the sorts of areas that you will need to have conversations in, but isn't meant to be used as a questionnaire to run through during the interview. We want to see you engage with the EP, the emphasis being on your ability to build rapport with a patient and show empathy.

In terms of the structure of the session, there will be three people will be in the 'room' – the facilitator (myself), you, and the expert patient/carer* for the exercise. If online, the facilitator and will sit with their camera and microphones off as your interview takes place. For the sake of this session, the feedback from the expert patient is pretty much all we are interested in. However, I will also be able to give you some more ideas on how to progress.

Please don't worry about the session. We know that psychiatric history taking can look daunting. Our aim is to provide you with a safe, educational space where you can develop some of the skills that you will need in the placement.

*If you have a carer you will be able to practice taking a 'collateral' history. However, you should also consider any impact on the carer's mental health and wellbeing.

Before the session:

- Take a look at the history taking sheet and have a think about some of the questions you'd like to ask the EP and how you may approach these questions
- Have a think about how you will start the interview, what you need to consider
- You will have 45- 60 minutes to take the EP's history, (aim for about 45/50 minutes to allowing you time to run over a little if needed)

The structure of each session is as follows:

- Introduction from Lived Experience Facilitator (LEF) running the session, and to meet the EP
- Some time to prepare your thoughts before starting the history, if you wish
- You will take the history (40-50mins recommended time)
- The EP will be given the chance to have a think about feedback (5-10mins)
- The EP will come back into the session to give feedback, and generate a discussion about the interview with the LEF and student
- The EP will now leave the session
- General discussion and feedback from LEF
- Quick check on your wellbeing and an opportunity for you to give feedback on how useful the session was for you

If you have any questions about the session or if there is something you are unsure of please get in touch.

Kind Regards,