

A GP framework for infant and early childhood mental health assessment (0–5 years) e-learning course



About this course

This infant and child mental health assessment and management e-learning course focuses on the identification, assessment, care planning and support required for children aged 0–5 at risk of or experiencing mental health difficulties. The course is built around three key areas of evidence-based practice – research evidence, practitioner experience, and child and family partner feedback. These elements were considered in the scoping, planning and development of the course, to build a General Practice Framework of:

- knowledge of common infant and child mental health conditions
- engagement skills required when interacting with an infant child and their family
- practical skills for infant and child mental health assessment and management.

Why was this course developed?

Patients talk to their GPs about mental health more than any other health condition. Data indicates that over 80% of 0–1 and 2–3 year olds had been to a GP in the past 12 months¹. In this age group parents may seek support on everyday parenting roles such as supporting their infant or toddler with sleeping and feeding, toileting, emotional regulation and school readiness. For some children early social emotional difficulties are not a phase, and early detection of behavioural and emotional problems has been shown to lead to successful early intervention and prevention of difficulties later in life.

¹Children's use of health care services, Diana Warren, Longitudinal Study of Australian Children Survey Annual Statistical Report 2017 chapter – October 2018

This course was developed to meet this increasing need for support in undertaking infant and early childhood mental health assessment and the management of ongoing care.

How was this course developed?

The course was co-designed in collaboration with GPs and parents to ensure content is relevant and realistic to the practitioner experience, with assistance from additional mental health professionals.

Who is this course for?

This course has been specifically designed for GPs who are seeking to enhance their clinical practice in mental health when working with infants and young children aged 0–5 years.

Learning outcomes

As you progress through this course, you will be able to:

- List the key strengths and vulnerabilities that influence infant and early childhood mental health
- Prioritise the key engagement skills required as part of an infant and early childhood mental health assessment
- Assess common mental health difficulties in children aged 0–5 years by undertaking a biopsychosocial mental health formulation
- Develop a comprehensive management plan related to common early childhood mental health concerns for children under 5 years.

Accreditation

This course is accredited with the RACGP as a CPD Accredited Activity and will attract 40 CPD points.

The course is also accredited by the General Practice Mental Health Standards Collaboration (GPMHSC) as a stand-alone Clinical Enhancement Module (as part of the MHST modular pathway) and with ACRRM as a PDP Accredited Activity.



Note: This is a standalone Clinical Enhancement Module, which forms part of a modular pathway for Mental Health Skills Training. To satisfy the requirements of the MHST Modular Pathway and become eligible to claim additional MBS items GPs must also complete one Core Module (CM) and await approval of eligibility from Medicare.