

# Personality disorders

(January 2017)

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## Rationale

Personality disorders are pervasive and maladaptive patterns of behavior exhibited over a wide variety of social, cultural, occupational, and relationship contexts and leading to distress and impairment. They represent important risk factors for a variety of medical, interpersonal, and psychiatric difficulties.

## Causal Conditions

The emergence of a personality disorder is a complex interaction of biological (e.g., genetic), social (e.g., poverty), and psychological factors (e.g., stress).

## Key Objectives

Given a patient with a personality disorder, the candidate will differentiate between a personality disorder and other mental illness, recognizing the high prevalence of co-morbidities. The candidate will formulate an appropriate management plan.

## Enabling Objectives

Given a patient with a personality disorder, the candidate will

- list and interpret critical clinical findings, including
  - a. sufficient clinical information (e.g., mental status examination) to diagnose the type of personality disorder;
  - b. risk factors associated with personality disorders (e.g., suicidal ideation, substance use);
  - c. any co-existing psychiatric conditions (e.g., mood disorder);
- construct an effective initial management plan, including

- a. proper management in the case of a patient requiring immediate intervention (e.g., suicide risk, risk to others);
- b. judicious use of pharmacotherapy, with consideration of the risk for abuse or overdose;
- c. referral for mutli-disciplinary and/or specialized care, if necessary.