

# Eating disorders training for medical students and foundation doctors



## Foreword

*'In 2012, Averil Hart, a 19-year-old student died as a result of anorexia nervosa. Five different NHS services had missed multiple opportunities to save her life over five months.*

*In its 2017 investigation, the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) found that Averil's deterioration and death were avoidable and that she had been failed by each of the NHS organisations involved in her care and treatment.*

*PHSO noted that the majority of medical professionals had received little or no training on eating disorders during their education and recommended that this be addressed. This was re-emphasised when the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee reviewed progress on the PHSO recommendations in 2019, calling for eating disorders to be covered effectively in both the undergraduate and postgraduate medical curricula.*

*This teaching package has therefore been developed, to ensure that all medical students and foundation trainees are trained to understand, identify, and respond effectively when faced with a patient with a possible eating disorder. Dedicated to the memory of Averil Hart, it is the result of a collaboration between the eating disorder charity Beat, Health Education England and the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Faculty of Eating Disorders.*

*We want to ensure that no other family has to endure what Averil, and her family have experienced. It is our hope that this will be a significant step to ensuring that avoidable deaths from eating disorders are consigned to the past.'*



### **Professor Tim Kendall**

National Clinical Director for Mental Health, NHS England; Co-chair of the Parliamentary Health Service Ombudsman's Delivery Group; Consultant Psychiatrist and Director of National Collaborating Centre at the Royal College of Psychiatrists

## About this training

Two teaching packages are available, one for medical students and the other for foundation trainees.

Each package is designed to provide 7 hours of education via taught sessions and simulation modules (3 hours, face-to-face or via video conference), e-learning (30 minutes) and self-directed learning (guideline = 3.5 hours), with the result that students and trainees exit their courses with the ability to identify and respond appropriately to eating disorders.

To deliver each of the packages, educators will need the powerpoint presentation and the simulation scenario relevant to the student group, along with a link to the appropriate e-learning module, all of which can be accessed via <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/training-cpd/medical-students-doctors>.

## Teaching package for medical students

### E-learning module 1

This takes 30 minutes to complete and has the following learning outcomes:

- Be able to identify the major eating disorders and spot the early warning signs.
- Understand the role of starvation in eating disorders and the effects on the brain.
- Understand common challenges experienced by clinicians in identifying people with eating disorders.

The e-learning module contains interactive features to enable students to engage with the material throughout the session. Students will need to complete all aspects of the module to gain a certificate of completion. The module is hosted on the e-learning for healthcare platform and is free to access.

There are resources and self-directed learning at the end of module 1. Medical students will need to read this information before attending the scenario-based session and are expected to complete 3.5 hours of further reading.

### Scenario based training session 1

The scenario-based session is 3 hours in duration and should be delivered face-to-face or through video conferencing using experienced actors. The aim of the session is for students to apply the knowledge gained in e-learning module 1 and to utilise communication and assessment skills previously learned in their medical training.

The scenario package contains:

- Facilitator PowerPoint
- Information on the scenario for the students
- An actor's script
- Tips for facilitators

During the scenario-based training, medical students will be able to:

- Assess the patient by taking a relevant history to make a differential diagnosis
- Explain the initial investigations required to guide the future management plan

## Teaching package for foundation trainees

Foundation stage doctors should have completed e-learning module 1 to be able to complete e-learning module 2 and scenario-based training 2.

### E-learning module 2

This takes 30 minutes to complete and has the following learning outcomes:

- Identify the occurrence of eating disorders in patients who may present with other conditions.
- Understand how to assess for an eating disorder, including nutrition history.
- Be able to identify physical, psychological, and psychosocial risks and refer appropriately.
- Recognise the official guidance and risk management care pathways available.

The e-learning module contains interactive features to enable students to engage with the material throughout the session. Doctors will need to complete all aspects of the module to gain a certificate of completion. The module is hosted on the e-learning for healthcare platform and is free to access.

There are resources and self-directed learning at the end of module 2 that give foundation trainees assessment and referral tools. Foundation trainees will need to complete an additional 3.5 hours of self-directed study with the aim of utilising the practical resources included in the e-learning module to complete scenario-based training session 2.

## Scenario based training session 2

The scenario-based session is 3 hours in duration and should be delivered face-to-face or through video conferencing using experienced actors. The aim of the session is for students to apply the knowledge gained in e-learning module 2 and to utilise communication and assessment skills previously learned in their medical training.

The scenario package contains:

- Facilitator PowerPoint
- Information on the scenario for the trainees
- An actor's script
- Tips for facilitators

During the scenario-based training, foundation trainees will be able to:

- Build rapport and try to engage the patient
- Elicit a comprehensive eating disorder history, picking up clues appropriately
- Explore the patient's current concerns, with an understanding of the bio-psycho-social factors influencing predisposing, precipitating factors, and contextual psychosocial factors perpetuating the illness.
- Understand the patient's protective, resilience factors including support systems and also personality and temperament
- Explain the need for further blood tests and ECG
- Demonstrate skills with supporting cares/family

## Endorsements

*'Eating disorders are a complex, high-risk area of practice that should be covered in every doctor's education. This brilliant resource pack helps to fill a critical knowledge gap with the most up-to-date information on early diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment. We hope it empowers students and trainees to offer the best possible support to patients so that they can make a full recovery.'*

Professor Colin Melville, Medical Director and Director for Education and Standards, General Medical Council.

*'The training was really useful, really increased my confidence surrounding talking to people who may present with an ED. I saw a patient recently with an ED and was able to use the skills learnt from this session!'*

*'I thought it was incredibly valuable and a really important training programme to roll out. I would be very happy to promote to my uni.'*

*'Thank you - I think that this is such an important (and often overlooked) topic that needs to be better incorporated into our education. The ability to practice with the simulated patient and working as a group were so helpful as it was so nice to get feedback and meet other medical students from different schools.'*

*'The scenario made me question what I would do in that situation as an FI which is in the quite near future. This is really helpful for me to see where the gaps in my knowledge are.'*

Feedback from medical students and foundation trainees who helped pilot this teaching

The development of this training was funded by Health Education England. It is endorsed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and supported by the General Medical Council.