SOCP121

Session 1
An Introduction to Holistic Approach
Department of Social Sciences
An Introduction to Holistic Approach

Session Aim:

Introduce students to the holistic approach to wellbeing and treatment on the basis of the biopsychosocial model, the patient/practitioner model of therapy, and incorporating feedback and reflection into practice.
An Introduction to Holistic Approach

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this session, you should:

• Be able to understand the biopsychosocial model
• Become aware how a holistic approach is relevant in working with a client
• Be able to create a holistic case formulation
Biopsychosocial Model: Determinants of Human Functioning

George L. Engel (1913 – 1999)

- American psychiatrist, worked most part of his life at Rochester University.
- In 1977, he published an article (Science), highlighting the limitations of the traditional biomedical model to understand health.
- Need to change the traditional biomedical focus on pathophysiology and other biological approaches to disease.
The **traditional biomedical approach** follows the **reductionist view** → All phenomena are best understood at the lowest level of natural systems (e.g., cellular or molecular).

The **Biopsychosocial approach** recognises that different clinical scenarios may be better understood scientifically at **several levels of the natural systems continuum**.
Biopsychosocial Model: Determinants of Human Functioning

Three interactive forces play a role in human functioning, well-being and behavior:

1. **Biological** – genetic & health-related factors (viruses, bacteria, lesions, etc.)

2. **Psychological** – perceptual, cognitive, emotional & personality factors (behaviours, beliefs, coping strategies, stress management, etc.)

3. **Socio-cultural** – interpersonal, societal, cultural & ethnic factors (financial status, employment, ethnicity, etc.)
Biopsychosocial Model: Determinants of Human Functioning

- Need to understand human health and illness in a holistic way, understanding patients and their contexts:
Class Activity
What influences me?

Write out on a piece of paper how you describe yourself.

Think about how the following areas have interacted and shaped your identity:

» Biological
» Psychological
» Socio-cultural
Biological Factors

*Genetics & General Health*

- Prenatal development
- Brain maturation
- Puberty
- Menopause
- Skin wrinkling & Hair loss
- Change in cardiovascular functioning
Psychological Factors

Cognitions, Emotions, Personality

- The nature of our personality and our temperament.
  - E.g. Introvert – prefer internal world of thoughts, feelings, fantasies, dreams.
  - E.g. Extrovert – prefer the external world of things, people, activities.

- A particular issue, e.g. trust, may recur & how this impacts over time.
  - E.g. infant’s trust in parents develops into more complex forms of trust over the life span for friends and lovers. This accumulated experience means that the person will deal with trust in a new way (with other people) and that trust is shown in different ways over life.
Socio-cultural Factors

Knowledge, attitudes and behavior associated with a group of people

- Family of origin (mother, father, siblings)
- Extended family (e.g. aunts, grandparents)
- School (teachers, peers)
- Social groups (religious, sports, hobbies)
- Ethnic background (language, traditions)
- Politics
- Workplace
Group Activity
How do these forces affect treatment?

As a class, let’s try and come up with some factors in each category which may affect treatment or treatment outcomes

“A diabetic patient presents for nutritional advice.”

- What biological factors may be at play in the illness?
- What psychological factors may affect treatment?
- What are some possible social factors, and how might these affect the patient’s current functioning?
Definition of Wellness

Wellness is “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948, p.1).

Wellness means a high level of functioning across the biopsychosocial domains/areas.

- **Bio**: Health; Functioning body; Homeostasis
- **Psycho**: Mental well-being; Reaching one’s true potential
- **Social**: Social capital/connections (friendships, social support); Social services (community groups, welfare, education, etc.)
Case Formulation

- Case formulation is a crucial clinical skill that integrates the assessment information to the treatment plan.
- It involves exploring the aetiology ("causes or origins") of a patient’s illness. It is a hypothesis about the possible mechanisms causing and maintaining the client’s symptom / problem.
- Case formulation involves mapping the original causes of problems, as well as factors that may help promote or prevent future problems with wellbeing.

The case formulation addresses the question:

"Why is this person, having this type of health problem, now?"
Biopsychosocial Model in Case Formulation

- **Biological Factors**
- **Psychological Factors**
- **Sociocultural Factors**

CLIENT’S CURRENT CONDITION
Case Formulation Components

Biological, psychological, and socio-cultural influences should all be considered when conducting a case formulation.

A case formulation considers:

- **Predisposing factors** = What makes a patient susceptible to a health condition
  - I.e. Obesity: Family history of obesity (Bio); Hates to cook (Psycho); Works lots of hours so no time to cook (Social); Live in a house next to McDonalds (Social)

- **Precipitating factors** = Triggers, the immediate causes of the health condition or its current symptoms (if any)
  - I.e. Obesity: hormonal changes (Bio); Binge eating (Psych)

- **Perpetuating factors** = What may make symptoms continue or worsen
  - I.e. Obesity: Housemates also don’t cook and suggest McDonalds for dinner every night (Social); Unhelpful beliefs, like “I really can’t be bothered” (Psycho)

- **Protective factors** = Ways people are protected from maladies
  - I.e. Obesity: Mother constantly checks up on eating (Social); Internal fear of diabetes due to father’s early death from diabetes (Psycho); Feel sick from eating too much McDonalds (Bio)
Biopsychosocial Model in Case Formulation

**PRESENTING PROBLEM**

**Predisposing factors**
Over the person’s lifetime, what factors contributed to the development of the problem?

**Precipitating factors**
Why now? What are the triggers or events that exacerbated the problem?

**Perpetuating factors**
What factors are likely to maintain the problem? Are there any issues that the problem will worsen, if not addressed?

**Protective factors**
What are the client’s strengths that can be incorporated to the treatment? Are there any social support networks or community resources available?
Case Formulation

“Why is this person, having this type of health problem, now?

→ Predisposing factors?
→ Precipitating factors?
→ Perpetuating factors?
→ Positive or protective factors?

How does the diagnosis and case formulation inform your treatment plan?
Case Formulation

- Tables can be helpful when trying to describe the aetiology of a patient’s condition or symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Biological</th>
<th>Psychological</th>
<th>Socio-Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Predisposing</strong></td>
<td>(Make susceptible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Precipitating</strong></td>
<td>(Immediate Cause)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perpetuating</strong></td>
<td>(Makes symptoms continue)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protective</strong></td>
<td>(Helps reduce harm)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing a Case Formulation

1. State the problem or diagnostic impression

2. State the precipitant factors

3. Describe critical predisposing factors

4. Include a statement about perpetuating or maintaining factors

5. Highlight protective factors and positive qualities
Writing a Case Formulation

A brief example of a case formulation:

“Susan presents with ….. (1) which appears to be precipitated by …..(2). Factors that seem to have predisposed her to (lower back pain, for example) include ….. (3). The current problem is maintained by …. (4). However, her protective and positive factors include… (5)”
From Formulation to Treatment

Think about:

How does the case formulation inform the treatment plan?

Consider:
- Best practices for this problem?
- Types of interventions that will address the predisposing, precipitating and perpetuating factors?
- How do you ensure that all these factors are considered?
- How do you tailor a holistic treatment? How do you create a strength-based treatment plan?
All types of therapies work towards a common goal

While treatment methods and strategies may vary between disciplines and practitioners…

They all share the goal of helping restore or improve a person’s functioning
Revision Questions

- What is the biopsychosocial model?
- How does it relate to wellbeing?
- How can I use it to conceptualize a patient's case?
- What are the main differences between biomedical and holistic approaches?
- How to formulate a case in a holistic utilizing the 4P model?
References


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