

Metacompetences for work with children and young people with physical health conditions

Working with children/young people, families and the systems around them

An ability to ensure that the child's needs remain paramount and to judge how best to assure their involvement in the process of assessment, goal planning, intervention and evaluation

An ability to judge how best to ensure that the child, or young person's presentation is understood in the context of their family life and their wider interpersonal context

An ability to integrate thinking about the emotional and psychological impact of a physical health condition and its treatments, along with an understanding of the physical impact of the condition itself

An ability to judge when physical health difficulties are impacting on a child/young person's ability to engage with assessment or interventions, and to make appropriate adaptations

an ability to adapt 'standard' psychological interventions for mental health conditions so as to accommodate the impact of physical health conditions

An ability to adapt communication and interventions to the child/young person's developmental stage

When children/young people and their parents/ carers are seen together, an ability to maintain a balanced and non-critical focus on all parties, such that all individuals feel included and regarded

An ability to hold in mind knowledge about mental health issues across the lifespan and consider their relevance to the ways that specific families function and present

An ability to adapt practice to accommodate the context in which the child and family are being seen (e.g. managing confidentiality in ward settings; delivering interventions in context where there are frequent interruptions)

An ability to judge the adaptations that schools and other systems need to make when balancing their concerns about the impact of health difficulties against the need for the child to engage with education or other pertinent activities, and to support them in implementing these changes

Where an assessment concludes that an intervention is not required but there are indications that the situation is unstable or could worsen, an ability to judge what form of monitoring and review is required and how this should be implemented

Team working with other healthcare professionals

An ability to encourage the integration of thinking about physical and psychological health and the reciprocal impact each has on the other

An ability to recognise the value of alternative perspectives discussed by colleagues and to integrate different explanatory models into the overall approach, but to do so on the basis of a reasoned formulation

When sharing information with others, an ability to judge what information needs to be shared, and with whom, titrating the level of confidentiality against the need for colleagues to have sufficient information if they are to act in the interests of the child/young person	
When undertaking work with other agencies, an ability to make a judgment about the potential impact of factors such as differences in statutory responsibilities and the operation of service constraints, and to take these into account when planning a shared intervention,	
Where colleagues/other agencies identify differing priorities and aims for an intervention, an ability to derive a collaborative treatment plan that balances these differing perspectives while maintaining a focus on the best interests of the child and family	
An ability to judge when there is sufficient evidence that professional colleagues are not performing their roles appropriately, or are performing them incompetently, and to act in line with professional, organisational and legal obligations	

Safe practice and supervision

An ability for clinicians to recognise the limits of their competence, and to judge when they should seek advice and/or supervision from more experienced colleagues	
An ability to judge when an assessment or intervention is creating unhelpful emotional demands and to take steps to put in place appropriate levels of self-care	

