

MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
Educational Institution
«BELARUSIAN STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY»



APPROVED

by Rector of the Educational
Institution «Belarusian State
Medical University»

 S.P. Rubnikov



26.06.2025

Reg. # UD 091-06/2526/edu.

MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY

**Curriculum of the educational institution
in the academic discipline for the specialty**

1-79 01 01 «General Medicine»

Curriculum is based on the educational program «Medical Psychology», approved 26.06.2025, registration # УД-091-06/2526/уч.; on the educational plan in the specialty 1-79 01 01 «General Medicine», approved 16.04.2025, registration # 7-07-0911-01/2526/mf.

COMPILERS:

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RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:

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(protocol # 7 of 08.05.2025);

by the Scientific and Methodological Council of the Educational Institution «Belarusian State Medical University»
(protocol # 10 of 26.06.2025)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

«Medical Psychology» is an academic discipline of the Mental Health Module, which contains systematic scientific knowledge about the role of mental personality traits in the occurrence, course and prevention of mental and somatic diseases, the basic patterns of psychology of a person with mental illnesses and the psychocorrective effect on the recovery process.

The purpose of the academic discipline «Medical Psychology» is the formation of specialized competencies for solving the tasks of professional activity in providing medical care to patients suffering from mental and/or somatic disorders; and the prevention of psychological problems at all stages of the disease.

The objectives of the discipline «Medical Psychology» are to form students' scientific knowledge about the psychological component of human disease, the causes of maladaptive behavior and methods of psychological rehabilitation; skills and abilities necessary for:

interactions between a doctor and a patient with various personality and behavior disorders;

diagnosis of suicidal behavior.

Relations to other educational disciplines

The knowledge, skills and abilities acquired while studying the academic discipline «Medical Psychology» are necessary for the successful study of the following academic disciplines: «Psychiatry and Narcology», «Neurology and Neurosurgery», «Professional Communication in Medicine».

A student who has mastered the content of the teaching material of the discipline «Medical Psychology» should have the following specialized competencies: apply psychodiagnostic and psychocorrective methods, principles of disease treatment and prevention, make a clinical diagnosis in case of mental pathology while providing psychiatric care.

As a result of studying the academic discipline «Medical Psychology», the student should

know:

basic mental functions and their physiological mechanisms, the importance of will and emotions, needs and motives, unconscious mechanisms in human behavior;

the structure of the internal picture of the disease;

typical reactions of a person to a disease, features of a patient's reaction to the work of hospital and outpatient health organizations, features of family reactions to diseases of its members;

theoretical foundations and phases of the development of doctor-patient relationship;

the main theoretical principles of addiction psychology, types and severity of addictive behavior;

personal characteristics, psychological resources and adaptive capabilities of patients with various somatic diseases;

the types of psychological protection;

the types, models and stages of psychological counseling;

the goals and objectives of crisis intervention;

the differences between crisis intervention and psychotherapy;
 psychological mechanisms of reaction to loss, age-related features of death perception;

strategies of psychological assistance in case of a reaction to loss;
 psychological aspects of various forms of autodestructive behavior;
 the roles of medical ethics and deontology;
 ethical principles in psychological work with children's patients;

be able to:

make a psychological characterization of a person, assess the patient's condition;
 assess his/her condition at the time of the interaction with the patient, master the simplest techniques of mental self-regulation;

assess the structure and severity of disorders of cognitive processes and the emotional-volitional sphere of patients;

structure diagnostic skills taking into account the psychological characteristics and social positions of the patient in order to obtain data for a functional (multi-axis or multidimensional) diagnosis;

use psychodiagnostic techniques and psychocorrective approaches;

manage psychological and personal mechanisms in the treatment of mental, behavioral disorders and somatic diseases;

evaluate the dynamics of psychological problems depending on the effectiveness of the treatment;

master:

verbal means of communication, active listening techniques;

verbal response techniques during a conversation;

the strategy of behavior and self-regulation in a situation of conflict: cooperation, compromise, avoidance, adaptation;

principles and methods of psychological counseling, psychocorrection, as well as principles and methods of psychotherapy.

Total number of hours for the study of the discipline is 80 academic hours, of which 42 classroom hours and 38 hours of student independent work. Classroom hours according to the types of studies: lectures – 12 hours (including 3 hours of supervised student independent work (SSIW)), practical classes – 30 hours.

Form of higher education – full-time.

Intermediate certification in the form of an exam (9th semester) is carried out according to the Mental Health Module (academic disciplines «Psychiatry and Narcology», «Medical Psychology»).

ALLOCATION OF ACADEMIC TIME ACCORDING TO SEMESTERS OF STUDY

Code, name of the specialty	Semester	Total number of academic hours	Number of classroom hours				Out-of-class self-studies	Form of intermediate assessment
			Number of classroom hours	including				
				class lectures	SSIW	practicals		
1-79 01 01 «General Medicine»	9	80	42	9	3	30	38	examination

THEMATIC PLAN

Name of section (topic)	Number of class hours	
	lectures (incl. SSIW)	practical
1. Introduction to the academic discipline «Medical Psychology». Ethical and deontological principles of relationships with staff and patients	1,5	-
2. Personality's reaction to the disease. The concept of psychological protection	1,5	-
3. Multifactorial nature of neurotic response mechanisms	1,5	-
4. Personality's harmony and disharmony states. Personality and behavioral disorder	1,5	6
5. Suicidal behavior	3,0	-
6. Acute stress reaction: grief reaction	1,5	-
7. Psychological work with patients suffering from psychosomatic disorders	1,5	-
8. Anxiety and phobic disorders	-	6
9. Psychosomatic disorders. Psychological defense mechanisms	-	6
10. Reaction to severe stress and adaptation disorders. Post-traumatic stress disorder. Reactive depressions	-	6
11. Dissociative and conversion disorders. Munchausen syndrome	-	6
Total hours	12	30

CONTENT OF THE EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLINE

1. Introduction to the academic discipline «Medical Psychology». Ethical and deontological principles of relationships with staff and patients

Medical psychology as a science. Goals and objectives of medical psychology as a science. The concept of mental health and its criteria. The relationship of the academic discipline «Medical Psychology» with other academic disciplines. The role of medical psychology in the work of a doctor.

Definition of the concepts of «norm» and «pathology» as the main methodological problem of medical psychology. Definition of the concept of «mental health».

Theoretical concepts of psychological assistance (behavioral, psychoanalytic, client-centered, existential). The concept of psychological health, the means of psychological assistance, the professional position of the doctor and the understanding of the disease in various psychological concepts.

Aspects of doctor-patient interaction. Professional and personal readiness of the doctor to provide medical care. Ethical principles of communication with patients and colleagues, deontological tactics of communication, taking into account age, character, temperament and the course of the disease.

Main areas of psychological assistance. Functions of clinical and psychological care: personality development, correction, rehabilitation, prevention. Psychological counseling. Psychological correction and psychotherapy. Psychological rehabilitation. Crisis intervention. Psychological methods of disease prevention.

2. Personality's reaction to the disease. The concept of psychological protection

Definition of the concept of «internal picture of the disease».

Gender, age and occupational characteristics of the reaction to the disease.

Individual and personal characteristics of the reaction to the disease.

The subjective picture of the diseases the most important factor determining the patient's behavior.

Types of personality reaction to the disease and social adaptation.

Abnormal behavior associated with the disease: somatization, simulation, denial of the disease.

Social concepts of health and disease (C.Herzlich). Cognitive representations of disease and health (G.Loewenthal, S. Bishop, S. Taylor, K. Petri).

Stages of formation and functions of the subjective picture of the disease. The difference between the subjective and medical pictures of the disease.

3. Multifactorial nature of neurotic response mechanisms

Definition of the concept of «neurotic response».

Intrapersonal conflicts: phase-specific stages of development, their significance in neurosis. Violations of the structure of the «I-concept» in neurogenesis. Features of locus control in the neurotic response register. The importance of cognitive activity in neurogenesis within the framework of the anticipatory concept. Stages of formation of neurotic syndromes.

Medical and psychological features of family functioning in neurotic spectrum disorders. The concept of a functional/dysfunctional family. Disruptions of the family

structure: imbalance of family cohesion and family flexibility (adaptation), coalitions, alliances, reversion of the family hierarchy, lack of differentiation in status among children. The psychological (sibling) position of the child in the family and its importance for the formation of a lifestyle and stable marriage. Advantages and disadvantages of sibling stereotypes, patterns and exceptions. Stages of parents' divorce experience. Conditions that aggravate the experience of divorce in children. Psychological characteristics of children in single-parent families. Families with a single parent (divorce, death of one of the spouses, adoption, birth out of wedlock).

4. Personality's harmony and disharmony states. Personality and behavioral disorder

Personality: definition of the concept, main components, social structure. A harmonious and accentuated personality.

Personality disorder: definition of the concept, psychosocial, clinical and categorical characteristics.

Clusters of personality disorders: epidemiology, etiology, classification, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention.

Personality and behavioral disorders due to illness, damage, or dysfunction of the brain. Persistent personality changes after a mental illness, a catastrophic experience (grief reaction, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc.), due to chronic pain syndrome.

Narcissistic and passive-aggressive personality disorders: definition of the concepts, characteristics.

Differential diagnosis with personality anomalies that form as a result of organic damage to the central nervous system.

Accentuation of the character of adolescence by A.Y.Lichko. Character accentuation according to K.Leonhard. Differential diagnosis of personality disorders with accentuation of personality traits.

Behavioral disorder: definition of the concept, main signs, causes, principles of treatment. Behavioral disorders that begin mainly in childhood.

Changes in the motivational sphere. Decreased purposefulness and activity of behavior. Uncritical behavior. The loss of socially developed «standards» of behavior. Violation of self-esteem.

Formation of pathological needs and motives. The formation of an inadequate personality direction.

Aggressive and auto-aggressive behavior.

Determinants of human behavior: biological, psychological and social.

The main groups and types of deviant behavior. Unsocialized behavior disorder. Socialized behavior disorder. Oppositional defiant disorder. Behavioral disorder limited to the family environment. Clinical aspects of deviant behavior².

Examination of patients with personality and behavioral disorders: taking patient's history, objective examination, psychiatric interview, interpretation of the results of psychodiagnostics examination methods, development of a plan for psychological assistance, registration of medical documentation.

5. Suicidal behavior

History of suicidology. Researchers in the field of suicidology include E.Durkheim, S.Freud, K.Menninger, E.Schneidman, N.Farberow and others.

Epidemiology of suicides. Suicidal crisis, its signs, causes and varieties. Principles and methods of crisis intervention.

Suicidal behavior: basic concepts, internal and external forms, periods and motives, classification of manifestations, diagnosis.

Suicide, parasuicide, suicidal crisis.

Definition of the term «suicide seeker». Personal characteristics of suicide seekers. Typology of suicide seekers according to E.Schneidman.

Features of suicidal behavior of children and adolescents. Suicidal groups. Factors that provoke the risk of suicide in children and adolescents.

Psychopathological and psychological mechanisms of suicidal behavior. Psychopathological concepts of P.Pinel, J.-E.Esquirol, R. von Krafft-Ebing.

Psychodynamic, existential-humanistic, cognitive-behavioral models of suicidal behavior.

6. Acute stress reaction: grief reaction

Grief as a psychological phenomenon. The dynamics of grief. The pathological reaction of grief: clinical, psychological and correctional aspects.

Acute stress reaction: definition of the concept, symptoms, causes, principles of treatment, prevention.

Psychological characteristics of people who have experienced acute grief. Normal and pathological reactions of loss; criteria for their assessment. Medical and psychological context of the circumstances of stigmatized death. Psychological assistance to people who have experienced acute grief. Psychological features of the perception of death in childhood.

7. Psychological work with patients suffering from psychosomatic disorders

Psychological characteristics of patients with cardiovascular, oncological, gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases. Methods of psychological work with the dying, the dementia-stricken, as well as people suffering from disfiguring diseases and those who have experienced events beyond the ordinary human experience.

Methods of psychological correction aimed at the family.

8. Anxiety and phobic disorders

Anxiety and phobic disorders: definition, types, symptoms, causes, clinical manifestations, diagnostic criteria, treatment, medical prevention.

Panic disorder with and without agoraphobia: definition of the concepts, symptoms, causes, clinical pictures, diagnostic criteria, treatment, medical prevention.

Generalized anxiety disorder: definition of the concept, symptoms, causes, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, psychoprophylaxis and psychohygiene.

Social phobias: definition of the concept, symptoms, causes, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, psychoprophylaxis and psychohygiene.

Simple (isolated) phobias: definition of the concept, symptoms, causes, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, medical prevention.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder: definition of the concept, symptoms, causes, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, medical prevention.

Pathologically habitual actions (onychophagia, dermatoplasia, finger sucking, jactitation, preadolescent masturbation, trichotillomania, etc.): definition of the concepts, symptoms, causes, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, psychoprophylaxis and psychohygiene.

Methods of anti-stress treatment, prevention of panic attacks, simple and social phobias. Coping strategies. Methods of work and leisure organization.

Examination of patients with various types of anxiety and phobic disorders: taking of patients' medical history, objective examination, psychiatric interview, interpretation of the results of psychodiagnostic examination methods, development of a plan for psychological assistance, registration of medical documentation.

9. Psychosomatic disorders. Psychological defense mechanisms

Psychosomatic disorders: definition, epidemiology, etiology, classification.

General aspects of somatic symptom disorders. Mechanisms of psychological protection.

Somatic symptom disorder: epidemiology, etiology, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, medical prevention. Psychological mechanisms of somatization of psychological problems.

Other somatic symptom disorders (undifferentiated somatic symptom disorder, chronic somatic symptom pain disorder). Psychological mechanisms of algic syndrome. Alexithymia: epidemiology, etiology, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention. The phenomenon of «escape into illness».

Examination of patients with psychosomatic disorders: taking patients' medical history, objective examination, psychiatric interview, interpretation of the results of psychodiagnostic examination methods, development of a plan for psychological assistance, registration of medical documentation.

10. Reaction to severe stress and adaptation disorders. Post-traumatic stress disorder. Reactive depressions

Types of extreme situations. Adaptive disorders (short-term depressive reaction, prolonged depressive reaction, mixed anxiety and depressive reaction, impaired emotions and behavior): epidemiology, etiology, classification, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention.

Post-traumatic stress disorder: epidemiology, etiology, classification, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention. The combination of reactions making «post-traumatic stress disorder». Features of post-traumatic syndrome in people who participated in armed conflicts and experienced violence.

Examination of patients with post-stress disorders: taking patients' medical history, objective examination, psychiatric interview, interpretation of the results of psychodiagnostic examination methods, development of a plan for psychological assistance, registration of medical documentation.

11. Dissociative and conversion disorders. Munchausen syndrome

Dissociative and conversion disorders: general clinical and psychological characteristics, modern theories of etiopathogenesis, classification and diagnostic criteria.

Dissociative amnesia, dissociative fugue, dissociative trance and a state of possession, dissociative motor disorders, dissociative seizures, dissociative loss of sensitivity: epidemiology, etiology, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention.

Munchausen syndrome: epidemiology, etiology, clinical picture, diagnostic criteria, treatment, prevention.

Examination of patients with dissociative and conversion disorders: taking patients' medical history, objective examination, psychiatric interview, interpretation of the results of psychodiagnostic examination methods, development of a plan for psychological assistance, registration of medical documentation.

EDUCATIONAL DISCIPLINE «MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY» CURRICULAR CHART

Section, topic #	Name of section (topic)	Number of class hours		Supervised student independent work	Literature	Practical skills	Form of control	
		lectures	practical				of practical skills	of current / intermediate assessment
	Lectures	9	-	3				
1.	Introduction to the academic discipline «Medical Psychology»	1,5	-	-				
2.	Personality's reaction to the disease. The concept of psychological protection	1,5	-	-				
3.	Multifactorial nature of neurotic response mechanisms	1,5	-	-				
4.	Personality's harmony and disharmony states. Personality and behavioral disorder	1,5	-	-				
5.	Suicidal behavior	1,5	-	1,5	1, 3			Testing
6.	Acute stress reaction: grief reaction	1,5	-	-				
7.	Psychological work with patients suffering from psychosomatic disorders	-	-	1,5	1, 3			Presenting an essay
	Practical classes	-	30	-				
8.	Anxiety and phobic disorders	-	6	-	1-3	Mastery of verbal means of communication, active listening techniques	Solving situational problems	Survey, testing
9.	Psychosomatic disorders. Psychological defense mechanisms	-	6	-	1-3	Mastery of verbal means of communication, active listening techniques	Solving situational problems	Survey

10.	Reaction to severe stress and adaptation disorders. Post-traumatic stress disorder. Reactive depressions	-	6	-	1-3	Assessment of suicidal risk	Solving situational problems*	Survey, testing
11.	Dissociative and conversion disorders. Munchausen syndrome	-	6	-	1-3	Mastery of verbal means of communication, active listening techniques	Solving situational problems	Survey
4.	Personality disorders. Differential diagnosis of personality disorders	-	6	-	1-3	Mastery of verbal means of communication, active listening techniques	Solving situational problems	Survey, control quiz*
	Total hours	9	30	3				Exam

*This is a mandatory form of current certification

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT

LITERATURE

Basic (relevant):

1. Stanko, E. P. Psychiatry and Narcology : textbook for students of higher education institutions of Medical Faculty for International Students / E. P. Stanko, S. V. Bizyukevich, S. L. Boyko. – Grodno : GrSMU, 2025. – 400 p.

Additional:

2. Kaplan and Sadock's Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry / R. Boland, M. Verduin. – Wolters Kluwer, 2024. – 5136 p.

Electronic courseware for the educational discipline «Psychiatry and Narcology»:

3. <https://etest.bsmu.by/course/view.php?id=815>.

METHODOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT INDEPENDENT WORK IN THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLIN

The time allocated for independent work can be used by students to:

- prepare for lectures and practical exercises;
- prepare for control papers and the exam in the academic discipline;
- study the topics (questions) submitted for their independent study;
- solving situational problems.

METHODOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND PERFORMANCE OF SUPERVISED STUDENT INDEPENDENT WORK IN THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

APPROXIMATE LIST OF TASKS FOR SUPERVISED STUDENT INDEPENDENT WORK:

- preparation of thematic reports, essays, presentations;
- taking notes from primary sources;
- preparation of tests for interpersonal testing.

FORMS OF CONTROL OF SUPERVISED STUDENT INDEPENDENT WORK:

- testing;
- presentation an essay.

LIST OF AVAILABLE DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

The following forms of current assessment are used to diagnose competencies:

- survey;
- control quiz;
- testing.

LIST OF AVAILABLE TEACHING METHODS

Linear (traditional) method;
active (interactive) methods:
 Problem-Based Learning (PBL);
 Team-Based Learning (TBL);
 Case-Based Learning (CBL).

LIST OF PRACTICAL SKILLS

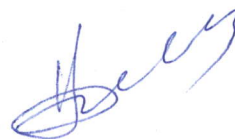
Name of the practical skill	Form of practical skill control
1. Mastery of verbal means of communication, active listening techniques	Solving situational problems
2. Assessment of suicidal risk	Solving situational problems

**PROTOCOL OF THE CURRICULUM APPROVAL
BY OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

Title of the discipline requiring approval	Department	Amendments to the curriculum in the academic discipline	Decision of the department, which designed the curriculum (date, protocol #)
Psychiatry and Narcology	Psychiatry, Narcology, Psychotherapy and Medical Psychology with advanced training and retraining course	None	Protocol # 7 of 08.05.2025);
Neurology and Neurosurgery	Neurological and Neurosurgical Diseases	None	Protocol # 7 of 08.05.2025
Professional Communication in Medicine	Psychiatry, Narcology, Psychotherapy and Medical Psychology with advanced training and retraining course	None	Protocol # 7 of 08.05.2025);

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H.F.M'Guil

Curriculum content, composition and the accompanying documents comply with the established requirements.

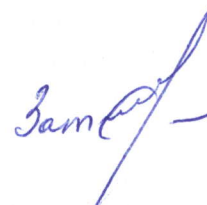
Head of the Office of Educational Activities of the educational institution «Belarusian State Medical University»



I.L.Kotovich

24.06.2025

Methodologist of the Educational and Methodological Department of the Office of Educational Activities of the educational institution «Belarusian State Medical University»



S.V.Zaturanova