



**CORE COMPETENCIES REFERENCE MANUAL  
FOR CLINICAL OFFICER PSYCHIATRY TO  
PRACTICE IN ZAMBIA**

**CORE COMPETENCIES AND MINIMUM STANDARDS**

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## **QUALIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Title of the programme:** Diploma in Clinical Medical Sciences Psychiatry or equivalent

**Key accountability for the job:** First line contact with mental health and psychiatric patient in primary health care

**Primary roles and responsibilities:**

- Provision of curative and preventive mental health care services
- Refer psychiatric patient to appropriate level of health care
- Carrying out administrative roles and responsibilities

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Health Professions Council of Zambia (HPCZ) is a statutory body that was established by the Health Professions Act No. 24 of 2009. The Act renames and continues the existence of the Medical Council of Zambia established by the Medical and Allied Professions Act of 1977. The Health Professions Act No. 24 provides for the registration of health practitioners and regulation of their professional conduct; provides for the licensing of health facilities and the accreditation of health care services provided by health facilities; and provides for the recognition and approval of training programmes for health practitioners.

Following the issuance of the guidelines for introduction of licensing examinations for health professionals to be registered with the Health Professions Council of Zambia, this bulletin provides an outline of the core competencies and minimum standards for registrants who have completed the Diploma Clinical Medical Sciences-Psychiatry or its equivalent seeking (clinical psychiatry) registration as Clinical Officer Psychiatry in Zambia.

## **2.0 EXIT EXAMINATIONS AND AWARD OF THE DIPLOMA CLINICAL SCIENCES-PSYCHIATRY**

Training institutions, private or public (local and foreign), approved and recognised by the health professions council of Zambia are mandated to examine and graduate their students under their own seal and authority as prescribed by the HPCZ act number 24 of 2009. The diploma in Clinical Medical Sciences-Psychiatry or its equivalent is also a designated pre-requisite qualification for Clinical Officer Psychiatry. This Diploma is also a baseline for advancement into Clinical Anaesthesia, Dermatology, Bachelor's Degree in Clinical Medicine and other Degree programs. Accordingly, a holder of this qualification will be required to take and pass the HPCZ licensure examination to qualify for registration with the council as a Clinical Officer Psychiatry (COP).

## **3.0 LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS BY THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA**

A person shall not practise as a health practitioner, unless that person is registered as a health practitioner in accordance with the Health Professions Act No. 24 of 2009. In the exercise of its functions under this Act, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Council of the Health Professions Council of Zambia

instituted Licensure Examinations to help maintain standards given the emergence of multiple private and public training institutions. This bulletin provides information on the Core Competencies and Minimum Standards for Clinical Officers Psychiatry to Work in Zambia and binds all parties regulated under this Act. Examination fees for licensure examinations as prescribed by the Council, are payable to the Health Professions Council of Zambia as part of the eligibility to sit for licensure examinations.

The HPCZ Licensure Examination assesses a Clinical Officer Psychiatry's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles, and to demonstrate fundamental patient-centred skills, that are important in health and disease and that constitute the basis of safe and effective patient care. The HPCZ Licensure Examination includes, but is not limited to, theoretical and clinical examinations which complement each and the other components. No component is a stand-alone in the assessment of readiness for Clinical Officer Psychiatry in Zambia.

The candidate will be assessed under three domains, namely:-

1. Knowledge
2. Skills
3. Attitude

The above domains will be assessed by means of a theory exam comprising of multiple choice questions followed by a composite objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

The five main **subject areas** (assessed under all three learning domains) for Clinical Officer Psychiatry (COP) in Zambia are:

1. Mental Health and Clinical Psychiatry
2. Internal Medicine
3. Obstetrics and Gynaecology
4. Paediatrics and Child Health
5. Surgery

The overall expected outcomes of the Clinical Officer Psychiatry's licensure examination is to ensure that the candidate meets the minimum expectations for the role as a front line health worker in the primary health care setting.

## **4.0 COMPETENCE OUTCOME GUIDELINES**

The curriculum must have identified attributes in each educational domain (knowledge, skills and attitude) and present them to guide student learning and assessment by examiners. HPCZ directs Clinical Officer Psychiatry to be compassionate and empathetic in caring for patients and to be trustworthy and truthful in all their professional dealings. Clinical Officer Psychiatry have a responsibility to respect and provide care that is up to standard for the lives and health that are entrusted by patients. The expectations are largely in six competence areas:

## **Overall Outcomes**

### Knowledge, Skills and Performance

- Care of the patient is the first concern.
- Provision of a good standard of practice and care by keeping professional knowledge and skills up to date while recognizing the limits of one's competence.

### Safety and Quality

- Prompt action if patient safety, dignity or comfort is compromised.
- Protect and promote the health of patients and the public.

### Communication, Partnership, and Teamwork

- Uphold the respect of patient's autonomy and dignity.
- Uphold informed consent and confidentiality.
- Work with colleagues in ways that best serve the patient's interests.
- Work with honesty, integrity and fairness.

### Maintaining Trust

- Work with honesty, openness and integrity.
- Uphold fairness with patients or colleagues.
- Safeguard the patient's and public's trust in the practitioner and the profession – never abuse the trust.

### Management

- Demonstrate awareness and apply administrative, management and finance principles.

Take up entrepreneurship challenges to complement public health services in the country

## 5.0 CORE COMPETENCIES: CLINICAL OFFICER PSYCHIATRY

DOMAIN	COMPETENCY	COMPETENCY STATEMENT	SUB-COMPETENCIES
KNOWLEDGE	MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE	Graduates should demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical, clinical sciences and application of this knowledge to patient care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show an understanding of the classification of mental disorders</li> <li>• Describe management of mental disorders using the bio-psychosocial model of care</li> <li>• Explain the biomedical basis of psychiatric conditions</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge in Medicine, Paediatrics, Obstetrics/Gynaecology, Surgery relevant to the practice of psychiatry</li> <li>• Describe behavioural syndromes associated with physiological disturbances</li> <li>• Describe the Psychiatric sequela of HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• Describe the psychiatric aspects of epilepsy</li> <li>• Explain community diagnosis</li> <li>• Describe the preventive, promotive and rehabilitative models in community mental health</li> <li>• Utilize knowledge of social change to solve health problems</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apply the concepts of community mental health in primary care</li><li>• Recognizes roles of community and family in community mental health care delivery systems in Zambia</li><li>• Establishes community-based mental health care services</li><li>• Categorize, the most commonly used psychotropic agents according to their indications.</li><li>• Classify and describe the mechanisms of action and uses of psychotropic agents in the management of psychiatric conditions.</li><li>• Explain the mechanisms of action and clinical applications of drugs used in Electro – Convulsive therapy</li><li>• Discuss the use and mechanisms of action of drugs used in the management of substance dependency</li><li>• Discuss adverse effects of psychotropic agents</li><li>• Discuss mental health disorders common in children and adolescents</li><li>• Discuss the different forms of epilepsy</li><li>• Discuss legal aspects in psychiatry</li><li>• Demonstrate knowledge of different types of neuropsychiatric conditions</li></ul>
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<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING &amp; IMPROVEMENT</b>	Graduates should be able to investigate and evaluate their patient care practices, appraise and assimilate scientific evidences & improve their patient care practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize best practices from routine patient care audits</li> <li>• Apply recommendation of routines updates on patient care</li> <li>• Utilize information technology</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of the research process</li> <li>• Mentor other professionals</li> <li>• Apply factors of social change in attending to mental and physical disorders</li> <li>• Assess factors of social change</li> <li>• Assess behaviour of patients</li> <li>• Refer patients for psychological treatment.</li> <li>• Utilize project management skills</li> <li>• Conducts home visit</li> <li>• Apply the scientific principles and knowledge of human neuroscience necessary for the practice of clinical psychiatry.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise knowledge of structure and functions of nervous system in patient care</li> <li>• Interpret the relevant investigations( e.g. cerebrospinal fluid)</li> <li>• Manage cerebro-vascular diseases and its associated symptoms and syndromes</li> <li>• Performs common assessment measures of cognition (e.g. GCS, MMSE)</li> <li>• Undertake a Neurological examination</li> <li>• Integrate relevant information on neuropsychiatric effects of selected medical conditions in psychopathology of mental illness.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>INTERPERSONAL &amp; COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>	Graduates must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange & teaming with patients, families & professional associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate ability in creating a therapeutic relationship with patients</li> <li>• Demonstrate listening skills</li> <li>• Demonstrate ability in educating patients and family</li> <li>• Demonstrate skills in shared confidentiality when communicating patient related findings to colleagues</li> </ul>
	<b>PATIENT CARE</b>	Graduates must be able to provide patient care that is compassionate, appropriate and effective for the treatment of health problems & the promotion of health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate care&amp; respectful behaviours</li> <li>• Conduct effective consultation (medical interviewing)</li> <li>• Develop &amp; carry out patient management plans</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform routine physical, neurological and mental state examinations</li> <li>• Perform appropriate medical procedures (i.e. I &amp; D)</li> <li>• Perform appropriate psychological assessments using Neuro-psychological assessment tools.</li> <li>• Apply psychological knowledge, theories and principles to various situations demanding counselling in clinical practice</li> <li>• Perform preventive &amp; promotive mental health care</li> <li>• Refer complicated cases to next level of care</li> <li>• Identify and address gender health related problems.</li> <li>• Carry out health promotion activities with a gender perspective.</li> </ul>
<b>ATTITUDES</b>	<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>	Graduates must demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, & sensitivity to a diverse patient population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate ethical sound practice</li> <li>• Practice informed decision making</li> <li>• Respect patients privacy in handling matters</li> <li>• Practice confidentiality with patients information</li> <li>• Demonstrate adherence to code of practice</li> <li>• Demonstrate sensitivity to diverse patient groups</li> </ul>

	<p><b>SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE</b></p>	<p>Graduates must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger context &amp; system of health care &amp; the ability to effectively call on system resources to provide care that is of optimal value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of the interaction of their practice with other members of the multidisciplinary team</li> <li>• Identify the role of non-governmental organization in the delivery of mental health care</li> <li>• Practice cost-effective care</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of management principles in mental health care</li> <li>• Carry out basic community research in the area of mental health, analyse research findings and write report.</li> <li>• Calculate epidemiological rates</li> </ul>
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## 5.0 BLUEPRINT WEIGHTINGS BY COMPETENCIES

	COMPETENCY	WEIGHTS
1	MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE	25%
2	PATIENT CARE	50%
3	PRACTICE-BASED LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT	5%
4	INTERPERSONAL & COMMUNICATION SKILLS	5%
5	PROFESSIONALISM	10%
6	SYSTEM-BASED PRACTICE	5%

## 7.0 CORE PROCEDURES: CLINICAL OFFICER PSYCHIATRY

The following procedures are the minimum standards and a full list can be found in the curriculum

Common Procedures(these procedure cut across all the five subject areas mentioned in 4.0)	Conduct a relevant history taking in all specific subject areas
	Conduct a relevant physical examination in all specific subject areas
	Analyse and Interpret patient's examination findings to diagnose both general and mental disorders
	Design individualized care plans using the Biopsychosocial model
	Perform bed side procedures such as Vitals, vene puncture, catheterization, NGT insertion, injection administration etc.
	Conduct Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) incl. HBB in paediatrics
	Perform basic laboratory procedure(RDT, RPR, HIV, Microscopy)

		Interpretation of common laboratory investigation (Blood, urine, stool etc.)
<b>Mental Health &amp; Psychiatry</b>	1	Conduct and interprets the mental status examination
	2	Assess for substance dependence and detoxification protocols for alcohol and other substances
	4	Assess for side effects of the major classes of psychotropic medications, especially extrapyramidal side effects
	5	Know and identify common neuroleptics drugs
	6	Assess psychiatric emergencies, especially dangerousness to self and others
	7	Implement crisis intervention and brief psychotherapeutic techniques
	8	Construct a bio-psycho-social formulation of the psychiatric and medical diagnosis
<b>Internal Medicine</b>	1	Interpret lumbar Puncture results
	2	Drug administration (dose, form and route)
	3	Gastric lavage
	5	Refer conditions beyond the scope of practice
<b>Obstetrics and Gynaecology</b>		
	1	APGAR scoring
	2	Demonstrate the use of a partograph
	3	Conduct Vaginal speculum Examination (incl. VIA, pap smear collection)
	4	Perform MVA
	5	Conduct deliveries
<b>Paediatrics and Child Health</b>	1	Conduct Support ventilation (Ambu bag)

	2	Interpret lumbar Puncture
	3	implement EPI
	4	Interpret under five children's clinic card
	5	Identify abnormalities concerning growth and development of children
<b>Surgery</b>	1	Perform Heimlich manoeuvre (abdominal thrust)
	2	Immobilising (POP, splinting, arm sling etc.)
	3	Perform Bandaging
	4	Perform suturing
	5	Conduct wound dressing

## 8.0 REFERENCES MATERIALS

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	Ahuja, N. (2006). <i>A Short Textbook of Psychiatry</i> , 7th Edition. New Delhi: Jaypee Brothers Publishers.
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<b>COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH</b>	Thornicroft, G. & Szukler, G. 2001. <i>Textbook of community psychiatry</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press
	Lundy, K. S. James, S. & Hantmans, S. 2001. <i>Opening the doors to health care in the community</i> . Sanburg: Jones & Barlett Co.
	Tortora J, Derrickson B (2014) <i>Principles of Anatomy and Physiology</i> 14th ed. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.



<b>BIOMEDICAL BASIS OF DISEASE</b>	Prescott, et al. (2011) <i>Microbiology</i> 7th Ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
	Murray KR, Botham KM (2012) <i>Harper's Illustrated Biochemistry</i> 29th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill
	American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (2013) <i>Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured</i> . Orange Book series, USA.
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	Kumar.P& Clark. M. (2005). <b>Kumar and Clark's Clinical Medicine</b> .6 <sup>th</sup> ed. London :Elsevier Saunders
<b>OBSTETRICS AND GYNAECOLOGY</b>	Monga A, Dobbs S (2006) <i>Gynaecology by Ten Teachers</i> 18th Edition. London: Hodder Arnold
	Hacker, N.,Moore, J.G. &Gambone,J. (2004). <b>Essentials of Obstetrics and Gynaecology</b> .4th Edition. New Delhi:Elsevier.
<b>PAEDIATRICS AND CHILD HEALTH</b>	Marcdante K, et al. (2011) <i>Nelson Essentials of Paediatrics</i> 6th ed. Philadelphia: Saunders Elsevier.
	Goldbloom R.B. (1992) <b>Paediatric Clinical Skills</b> , London: Churchill Livingstone
<b>SURGERY</b>	<u>Rains H, Richie D (2003) Bailey, Hamilton, <i>Bailey &amp; Love's Short Practice of Surgery</i> 26th ed. London: H. K. Lewis.</u>
	Townsend,M.S. (2012). <b>Sabiston's Textbook of Surgery</b> (19 <sup>th</sup> Ed.) Saunders.
<b>INTERPERSONAL &amp; COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b>	Guffey ME (2007) <i>Essentials of Business Communication</i> 7th ed. Australia: South-Western College Publishing.

	Hybels S, Weaver R (2004) <i>Communicating Effectively</i> . 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill
<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>	HPCZ (2016) <i>Guidelines for good practice in the Healthcare profession – Maintaining Patient Confidentiality</i> . HPCZ Lusaka
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