

Exploring the Role of Psychologists on Addiction Consult Services in Acute Care Settings - PubMed

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An Addiction Consult Service (ACS) utilizes an interdisciplinary approach to fill an important gap in substance use treatment for patients who are admitted to an acute care hospital. While each ACS team's composition mirrors the needs of the patient population, there is a lack of literature on the role of psychologists within ACS teams despite psychotherapeutic intervention being a key component of substance use treatment. The current article aims to clarify how psychologists with specialized training in the treatment of substance use can contribute to the overall goal of an ACS in an acute care hospital setting. Drawing from the competency benchmarks put forth by the American Psychological Association to guide doctoral-level psychology training, we draw connections between relevant competencies for independent psychological practice and the ACS landscape. The importance of psychologists' competencies in Interdisciplinary Systems, Scientific Knowledge and Methods, Evidence-Based Practice, Individual and Cultural Diversity, and Relationships are highlighted and demonstrated through hypothetical case scenarios. This article provides an introduction to the ways in which psychology can contribute to the interdisciplinary environment of ACS, both clinically and foundationally. With this work, we hope to encourage additional inquiry into the intersection of psychology and addiction consult work.

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