

Guidelines for Site-based Implementation of Structured Assessment of Clinical Evaluation Reports (STACERs) General Psychiatry Residency Program

Background

As per the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), the purpose of the STACER is “to assess the Psychiatry resident’s ability to acquire a comprehensive history from a patient, evaluate his/her current mental state, interpret the acquired information and arrive at a diagnosis, formulation and management plan.” Successful STACERs are a requirement in the Foundations and Core of Discipline (FOD and COD) stages of training – please see relevant residency program guidelines for details.

The purpose of this guideline is to provide guidance to hospital training sites regarding best practices in ensuring residents have access to practice (formative) STACERs during residency training. Summative STACERs for FOD and COD are managed centrally by the residency program in collaboration with hospital sites.

Practice STACER Guidelines

1. **Communication by hospital sites:** All sites must communicate to residents at the beginning of their rotations how they can book practice STACERs during their rotations.
2. **Supervision and patients for practice STACERs:** While it is acceptable to have a primary rotation supervisor also act as the practice STACER supervisor, it is strongly recommended that residents have access to alternate supervisors and patients specifically booked for practice STACERs (rather than a new patient assessment) to optimize learning. New patient assessments may offer opportunities to practice elements of a STACER; however, clinical care needs can supersede the additional time it may require for coaching and feedback with practice STACERs. As such, sites must provide opportunities for residents to participate in practice STACERs with a patient specifically booked for teaching and learning (i.e. not a new patient assessment).
3. **Protected time:** Residents should be provided with protected time of at least 2 hours (and potentially more if there are STACER related accommodations as per the Office of Learner Affairs/OLA) for practice STACERs.
4. **Responsibility for arranging practice STACERs:** Residents and supervisors share responsibility for arranging practice STACERs. Following hospital site communication regarding how to arrange practice STACERs, it is strongly recommended that both residents and supervisors work together to proactively set aside protected time to conduct practice STACERs.

Feedback, questions, or concerns regarding booking practice STACERs

Should a resident have any questions or experience any challenges in booking practice STACERs, they should contact their local (hospital site) Postgraduate Site Director. Residents can also consult with resident leaders – Chief Residents and PRAT co-presidents or year representatives for assistance. At any time, residents can also seek guidance from the residency program’s Resident Advisors <https://psychiatry.utoronto.ca/resident-advisor>

Residents are encouraged to provide feedback regarding access to practice STACERs in rotation evaluations and in the residency program’s bi-annual site surveys (both are online and anonymous).

Any concerns regarding practice STACERs not resolved at the site-level can be escalated to the Program Director.

Other important information regarding STACERs

STACER requirements

Both summative and formative (practice) STACERs are required.

For summative STACERs (RCPSC requirement):

1. All PGY2s must successfully complete a Foundations of Discipline (FOD) general psychiatry STACER.
2. All PGY4/5s must successfully complete two Core of Discipline (COD) STACERs (formerly known as "Exit STACERs").

For practice (formative) STACERs*:

1. They are required between FOD and COD (PGY2-4) with a total of 4 per academic year.
2. If there are gaps in knowledge or skills identified in STACER performance, additional practice STACERs may be recommended and/or required by the program.
3. No longer required after COD STACERs have been successfully completed.
4. Any resident who wishes additional practice beyond what has been detailed above, can request support from their Postgraduate Education Site Director for their current core rotation site.

*Please note practice STACERs are not offered during the PGY3/COD Child and Adolescent Psychiatry rotation and at some elective sites – residents can contact the program via the STACER email to request assistance with practice STACERs - psych.stacer@utoronto.ca

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