

ST3-FP-AOP-EPA14 – Civil forensic psychiatry: Family Court

Area of practice	Forensic psychiatry		EPA identification	ST3-FP-AOP-EPA14	
Stage of training	Stage 3 – Advanced		Version	v0.7 (EC-approved 10/04/15)	
The following EPA will be entrusted when your supervisor is confident that you can be trusted to perform the activity described at the required standard without more than distant (reactive) supervision. Your supervisor feels confident that you know when to ask for additional help and that you can be trusted to appropriately seek assistance in a timely manner.					
Title	Civil forensic psychiatry: Family Court.				
Description Maximum 150 words	Undertake assessment, either individually or in collaboration, of families appearing before the Family Court in relation to child custody proceedings and prepare reports setting out findings and addressing relevant questions.				
Fellowship competencies	ME	1, 2, 3, 8	HA	1, 2	
	COM	1, 2	SCH		
	COL	1, 3, 4,	PROF	1, 2, 5	
	MAN				
Forensic competencies For Certificate of forensic psychiatry trainees only	ME	a	HA	c	
	COM	a, b	SCH		
	COL	b, c	PROF	a	
	MAN	a			
Knowledge, skills and attitude required The following lists are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.	Competence is demonstrated if the trainee has shown sufficient aspects of the knowledge, skills and attitude described below.				
	Ability to apply an adequate knowledge base - Understands the legal or administrative context of the assessment request and any obligations or relevant court rules a medical expert must address in fulfilling that function. - Understands the ethical issues and risks of providing an expert opinion to the Family Court. - Understands the role of an expert witness, including the limits of expertise. - Evidence of knowledge of the literature in the assessment of parenting capacity. - The relevant legislation that pertains particularly to assessments for the Family Court.				

	• Specific knowledge of the literature in areas more commonly related to family assessments with respect to psychiatric disorders and developmental issues, eg. developmental trauma, intellectual disability, learning difficulties, ADHD, conduct disorder and autism spectrum disorder. • The impact of developmental age upon the assessment of children involved in Family Court assessments. Skills • Prepare reports setting out the relevant context, family assessment, clinical findings and addressing relevant questions. • Liaise with other disciplines involved in the care of families appearing before the Family Court. • Manage boundary issues, which may be present when working with families, particularly when child custody is in dispute between two parties. • Frame advice or recommendations cognisant of the available resources. • Identify issues such as privacy and confidentiality and how they impact upon communication with the Family Court and relevant agencies. • Advocate, as appropriate, for the children in the midst of custody disputes. Attitude • Non-judgemental approach to the issues raised by family assessments for the Family Court. • A diligent attitude to eliciting information from parents, children, relatives, teachers and other health workers involved. • Awareness of own limitations and willingness to seek others' opinion when required. • The trainee should have an awareness of, and have appropriate attitudes around, interpersonal dynamics and boundaries that may arise in the assessment of parents and their children.
Assessment method	Progressively assessed during individual and clinical supervision, including three appropriate WBAs.
Suggested assessment method details <i>(These include, but are not limited to, WBAs)</i>	• Case-based discussion. • Direct Observation of Procedural Skills (DOPS) - consultation with other sources of information in the assessment of families.
References AZAR ST& COTE LR. Sociocultural issues in the evaluation of the needs of children in custody decision-making. What do our current frameworks for evaluating parenting practices have to offer? <i>Int J Law Psychiatry</i> 2002; 25: 193–217. AZAR ST, LAURETTI AF & LODING BV. The evaluation of parental fitness in termination of parental rights cases: a functional-contextual perspective. <i>Clin Child Fam Psychol Rev</i> 1998; 1: 77–100. DONALD T & JUREIDINI J. Parenting capacity. <i>Child Abuse Review</i> 2004; 13: 5–17.	

REDER P, DUNCAN S & LUCEY C. What principles guide parenting assessments? In: Duncan S, Reder P & Lucey C, eds. *Studies in the assessment of parenting*. London: Taylor & Francis, 2003; 3–26.

WHITE A. *Assessment of parenting capacity: literature review*. Sydney: Centre for Parenting and Research, NSW Department of Community Services, 2005.

COL, Collaborator; COM, Communicator; HA, Health Advocate; MAN, Manager; ME, Medical Expert; PROF, Professional; SCH, Scholar