

International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders Accreditation Task Force (14 nations, ATF)

Special issue, *Psychiatry Research*, 2021: [*Knowledge and competency standards for specialized treatments for obsessive-compulsive disorder throughout the lifespan*](#)

McGill University News Release

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Expert ATF Phase Two Papers

1. **Sookman, D.**, Phillips, K.A., Mataix-Cols, D., Veale, D., 2021. Introduction to knowledge and competency standards for specialized treatments for obsessive-compulsive disorder throughout the lifespan: Phase two series by the International Accreditation Task Force of the Canadian Institute for Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (CIOCD, www.ciocd.ca). *Psychiatry. Res.* 298, 113753. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.113753>

Abstract: This paper presents an introduction to the phase two series of papers by the 14 nation International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders Task Force (ATF) of the Canadian Institute for Obsessive Compulsive Disorders. These papers present evidence-based knowledge and competency standards developed by the ATF for specialized treatments for obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) through the lifespan, operationalized as clinician abilities. Specialty standards for OCD do not currently exist and are deemed by experts to be foundational to transformative improvement globally in quality and accessibility of evidence-based treatments for this crippling disorder. Currently available guidelines for care are deemed to be essential but insufficient because of highly variable clinician knowledge and competencies specific to this disorder. The ATF standards encompass specialized cognitive behavior therapy, and pharmacotherapy, for pediatric and adult OCD. Evidence-based methodology with integration of expert opinion are described. Upcoming ATF phases three and four will involve development and implementation of training criteria and processes for certification (individual clinicians) and accreditation (clinical sites) based on the ATF standards. These standards will require periodic review and updating commensurate with advances in clinical research. We hope that this international initiative constitutes a significant step forward to inform and advance evidence-based specialized treatment and training for OCD.

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2. **Sookman, D.**, Phillips, K.A., Anholt, G.E., Bhar, S., Bream, V., Challacombe, F.L., Coughtrey, A., Craske, M.G., Foa, E., Gagné, J.-P., Huppert, J.D., Jacobi, D., Lovell, K., McLean, C.P., Neziroglu, F., Pedley, R., Perrin, S., Pinto, A., Pollard, C.A, Radomsky, A.S., Riemann, B.C., Shafran, R., Simos, G., Söchtting, I., Summerfeldt, L.J., Szymanski, J., Treanor, M., Van Noppen, B., van Oppen, P., Whittal, M., Williams, M.T., Williams, T., Yadin, E., Veale, D., 2021. Knowledge and competency standards for specialized cognitive behavior therapy for adult obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Psychiatry. Res.* 303, 113752.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.113752>

Abstract: Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a leading cause of disability world-wide (World Health Organization, 2008). Treatment of OCD is a specialized field whose aim is recovery from illness for as many patients as possible. The evidence-based psychotherapeutic treatment for OCD is specialized cognitive behavior therapy (CBT, NICE, 2005, Koran and Simpson, 2013). However, these treatments are not accessible to many sufferers around the world. Currently available guidelines for care are deemed to be essential but insufficient because of highly variable clinician knowledge and competencies specific to OCD. The phase two mandate of the 14 nation International OCD Accreditation Task Force (ATF) created by the Canadian Institute for Obsessive Compulsive Disorders is development of knowledge and competency standards for specialized treatments for OCD through the lifespan deemed by experts to be foundational to transformative change in this field. This paper presents knowledge and competency standards for specialized CBT for adult OCD developed to inform, advance, and offer a model for clinical practice and training for OCD. During upcoming ATF phases three and four criteria and processes for training in specialized treatments for OCD through the lifespan for certification (individuals) and accreditation (sites) will be developed based on the ATF standards.

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- Pittenger, C.,** Brennan, B.P., Koran, L., Mathews, C.A., Nestadt, G., Pato, M., Phillips, K.A., Rodriguez, C.I., Simpson, H.B., Skapinakis, P., Stein, D.J., Storch, E.A., 2021. Specialty knowledge and competency standards for pharmacotherapy for adult obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Psychiatry. Res.* 300, 113853. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.113853>

Abstract: Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) affects approximately one person in 40 and causes substantial suffering. Evidence-based treatments can benefit many; however, optimal treatment can be difficult to access. Diagnosis is frequently delayed, and pharmacological and psychotherapeutic interventions often fail to follow evidence-based guidelines. To ameliorate this distressing situation, the International OCD Accreditation Task Force of the Canadian Institute for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders has developed knowledge and competency standards for specialized treatments for OCD through the lifespan. These are foundational to evidence-based practice and will form the basis for upcoming ATF development of certification/accreditation programs. Here, we present specialty standards for the

pharmacological treatment of adult OCD. We emphasize the importance of integrating pharmacotherapy with clear diagnosis, appreciation of complicating factors, and evidence-based cognitive behavioral therapy. Clear evidence exists to inform first- and second-line pharmacological treatments. In disease refractory to these initial efforts, multiple strategies have been investigated, but the evidence is more equivocal. These standards summarize this limited evidence to give the specialist practitioner a solid basis on which to make difficult decisions in complex cases. It is hoped that further research will lead to development of a clear, multi-step treatment algorithm to support each step in clinical decision-making.

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4. **Piacentini, J.,** Wu, M., Rozenman, M., Bennett, S., McGuire, J., Nadeau, J., Lewin, A., Sookman, D., Bergman, R.L., Storch, E., Peris, T., 2021. Knowledge and competency standards for

specialized cognitive behavior therapy for pediatric obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Psychiatry Res.* 299, 113854. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.113854>

Abstract: Although exposure-based cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and pharmacotherapy have demonstrated efficacy for obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), the lack of clinicians effectively trained in these treatments significantly limit effective intervention options for affected youth. This is very unfortunate since child onset is reported by 50% of adults with OCD. To ameliorate this serious global issue the 14 nation International Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders Accreditation Task Force (ATF) of The Canadian Institute for Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (CIOCD) has developed knowledge and competency standards recommended for specialized treatments for OCD through the lifespan. Currently available guidelines are considered by experts to be essential but insufficient because there are not enough clinicians with requisite knowledge and competencies to effectively treat OCD. This manuscript presents knowledge and competency standards recommended for specialized cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) for pediatric OCD, derived from comprehensive literature review and expert synthesis. In addition to standards covering the elements of individual CBT-based assessment and treatment, family and school interventions are addressed given the critical role these domains play in the psychosocial development of youths. The ATF standards presented in these phase two papers will be foundational to the upcoming development of certification (individuals) and accreditation (sites) for specialized treatments in OCD through the lifespan.

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5. **Weidle, B.**, Ivarsson, T., Asbahr, F.R., Calvo, R., Mataix-Cols, D., Rynn, M.A., Storch, E.A., 2021. Specialty knowledge and competency standards for pharmacotherapy for pediatric obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Psychiatry. Res.* 299, 113858.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2021.113858>

Abstract: Evidence based treatments for pediatric Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) are delivered with varying levels of expertise. This paper is part of the phase two series by the International OCD Accreditation Task Force (ATF) to advance a standardized high level of care globally. This paper presents specific knowledge and competencies recommended for specialized practice for pediatric psychopharmacologists working with OCD, developed by an international group of clinicians with extensive expertise in assessment and treatment of OCD. Tabulated knowledge and competency standards are operationalized as clinician abilities with specification of evidence for each standard. The distinction between current practice guidelines and ATF standards is discussed. Drug treatment has a solid evidence base. However, it should not be applied isolated, but informed by broad competence in general child and adolescent psychiatry and pediatrics. Other treatment relevant areas such as specialty CBT, family functioning, developmental issues, and neurobiology require consideration. Drug treatment includes several phases with varying degrees of evidence: Starting up medication, titration to maximum tolerated dose, maintenance, termination, and relapse prevention. In complex cases, pharmacotherapy with weak evidence may be needed to target symptoms and/or co-morbidity. The ATF knowledge and competency standards presented will be reviewed and updated commensurate with research.

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