**CORE OF DISCIPLINE #5: COMMUNICATE INFORMATION TO FAMILIES OR CAREGIVERS**

**Short Description:**
Working with families and caregivers is an essential skill in psychiatric practice. Effective communication with these key stakeholders about the patient’s diagnosis, prognosis and treatment recommendations needs to be clear, helpful and empathically delivered.

**Assessment Options:**
- Direct observation

**Scope:**
- Meeting with a family member or caregiver (or SDM) of a psychiatric patient where the patient’s diagnosis, prognosis and treatment are discussed
- Can be in a context where a patient is incapable or is a child, though not always

**Possible Settings:**
- Any psychiatry rotation
- Often during family meetings

**Milestones:**

**COD5M1:** Provides information about the patient’s diagnosis, prognosis and treatment recommendations (or options) to the family member, caregiver or SDM
- This information must all be accurate and complete
- Where the patient is capable, learner will have ensured that the patient has given consent to discuss this information prior to proceeding.

**COD5M2:** Is able to answer the family member, caregiver or SDM’s questions accurately
- This information must be accurate
- If information is not known, demonstrates willingness to get information at a later date

**COD5M3:** Communicates information effectively and empathically
- Applies psychotherapeutic skills, relationship-centred and trauma-informed care principles
- Explains information in a manner that is at an appropriate level to the listener and checks to make sure they have accurately understood the information conveyed
- Pieces out information appropriately to ensure the listener is not overwhelmed by too much information
- Demonstrates empathy, especially when giving difficult news (for example, about diagnosis/prognosis)
- Also tries to impart hope and communicates using recovery-oriented language and principles

**COD5M4**: Attends to safety planning. Actively enlists family member or caregiver into circle of support for patient.

- Discusses options family member or caregiver has if patient decompensates or there are safety concerns (e.g. Form 2 protocol)
- Appropriately follows up on any further safety concerns brought up by the family member or caregiver during this discussion