

The Mental Status Exam

Jonathan Bolton MD

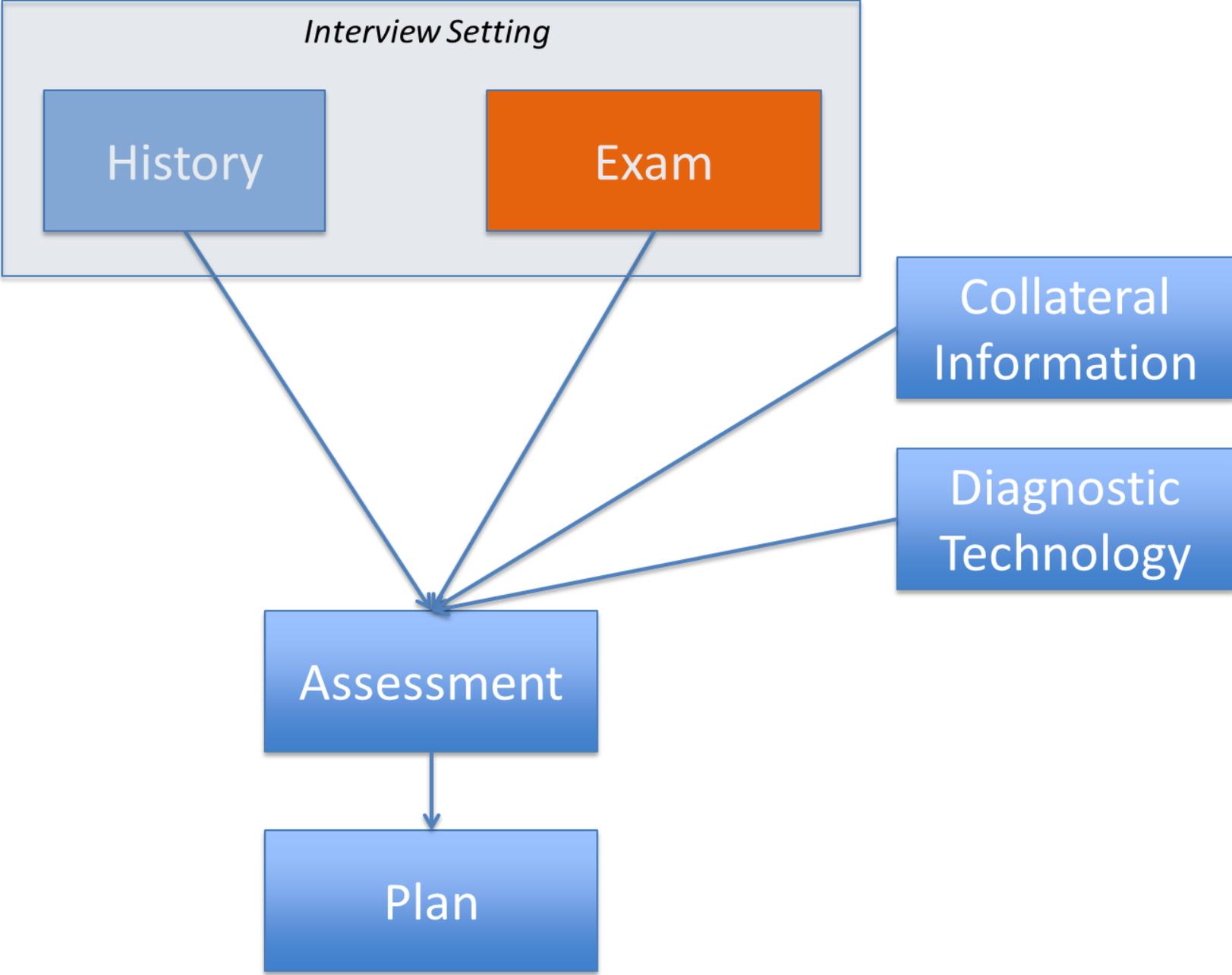
Jerry Simmons MA

Center for Rural and Community Behavioral Health

University of New Mexico

Mental Status Exam

- Analog to Physical Exam
- Uses different types of information (symptoms, signs, answers, provoked responses)
- Standard form and vocabulary



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The Psychiatric

Mental Status Examination

Paula T. Trzepacz and Robert W. Baker



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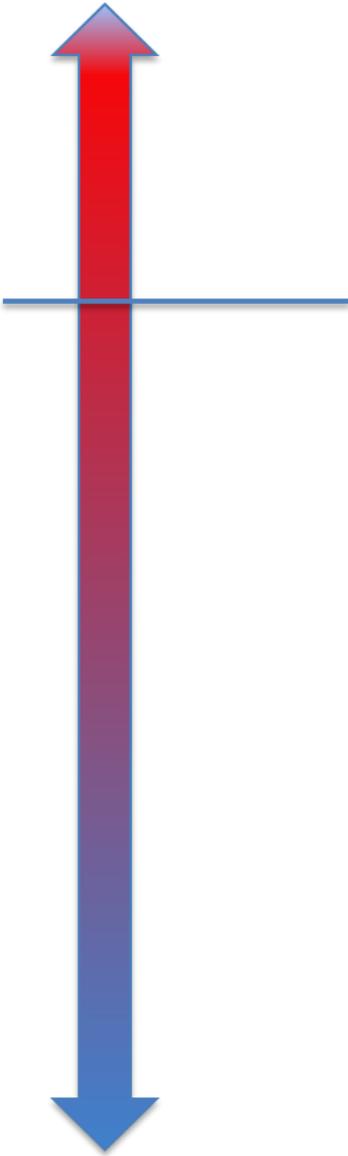
1993

The 4 A's

- Attention
- Appearance
- Attitude
- Activity

Attention/Arousal

- Level of consciousness/Alertness
- Orientation



LEVEL OF ALERTNESS/CONSCIOUSNESS

Hypervigilant, hyper-aroused

Normal level of consciousness, arousal

Wakeful but unresponsive

Drowsy/Somnolent

Obtunded

Stuporous

Comatose

Testing Alertness/Level of Consciousness

- Observation
- Tasks
 - Spell 'WORLD' forward and backward
 - Months of year
 - Digit span

Causes of Decreased Alertness

- Intoxication
- Sleep deprivation
- Delirium
 - Reversible
- Concussion
- Post-ictal state
- Brain lesions

Orientation

- Person (who)
- Place (where)
- Time (when)
- Purpose (why)

APPEARANCE

- Age
- State
 - Distress; looking ill
- Body
 - General (shape, size, smell)
 - Surface
 - Bruises, lesions, lacerations, tattoos, needle marks
- Grooming and Attire
- Position and Posture

Attitude

- To the interview
- To the interviewer
 - Eg cooperative, hostile, facetious, seductive, guarded, impatient, child-like
 - Politeness: obsequious to hostile

Attentiveness and Attitude

Attentiveness

- Attention/Distractibility
- Internal preoccupation
- Ignoring

Attitude

- Rapport
- Cooperation