



When evidence meets perspectives and judgement: understanding clinical decisions

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Evidence-based medicine aspires to guide clinical decision-making through the best available research. Yet in large parts of psychiatry, particularly in the treatment of complex conditions, the evidence base is often limited, inconclusive, or difficult to translate to individual patients. Clinicians are therefore faced with a fundamental tension: decisions must be made even when the evidence does not provide clear answers. In this space, different interpretations and judgements emerge, and clinical decisions may diverge. It is here that the gap between research and clinical care becomes most visible.

This workshop examines what happens within that gap. Using the case of antidepressant treatment in patients with anorexia nervosa and underweight, participants will explore how the same evidence base can lead to markedly different recommendations, from clear discouragement to cautious, conditional use. The case serves as a lens to understand how evidence is interpreted, how recommendations are constructed, and how clinical decisions are made in practice.

The aim is to deepen understanding of how evidence functions in real-world clinical settings. We contrast standardized, guideline-driven approaches with more integrative, evidence-informed practices that incorporate clinical expertise, contextual judgement, and patient factors.

Participants will:

- Reflect on how evidence is interpreted and used in their clinical work
- Identify factors shaping decision-making beyond research evidence
- Explore ways to integrate multiple forms of knowledge in complex cases. The workshop directly

addresses the challenge of narrowing the gap between research and clinical care.

The workshop is designed as a structured, interactive exploration of clinical decision-making under uncertainty, grounded in participants' own experiences.

It begins with a brief clinical case of a patient with anorexia nervosa, underweight, and comorbid depression, where the decision to initiate antidepressant treatment is uncertain. Participants respond to a live poll indicating how they would approach the case. The results are displayed immediately, making visible the variation in clinical decisions within the room.

Participants then work in small groups to formulate a decision, identify which knowledge sources they rely on (for example guidelines, clinical experience, patient factors), and reflect on how they interpret the available evidence. Each group briefly presents their reasoning, allowing different approaches to emerge. This is followed by a second poll and facilitated discussion on what participants consider the most relevant basis for decision-making, introducing reflection on different ways of understanding and using evidence in practice.

Participants are then presented with contrasting treatment recommendations derived from the same evidence base and invited to vote on which they find most convincing. The discussion explores how such differences arise and what they imply for clinical care.

Finally, the case is revisited with increased complexity, followed by a new poll to explore how decisions are shaped by context. The workshop concludes with a reflection on navigating uncertainty and integrating multiple sources of knowledge in clinical practice.