

# THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL MODEL OF CARE

The Medical Model of Care has an expectation that symptoms have a direct **biological cause**, and we should always search for a **definitive diagnosis** and **cure**.

Problems with the Medical Model include:

- Assumption that:  
“We can’t find anything” = “It’s all in their head”
- **Narrow** framework
- Misses important **psychological** and **social** factors that have a role in the **onset, maintenance and lived experience** of all illnesses

In the Medical Model, psychological factors are seen as;

- **Secondary** to physical symptoms
- **Separate** to physical symptoms

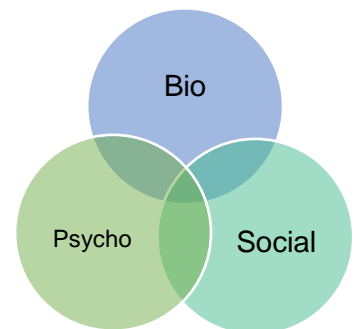


This “**dualist**” perspective is seen in Psychiatry as well as in Physical Health Medicine

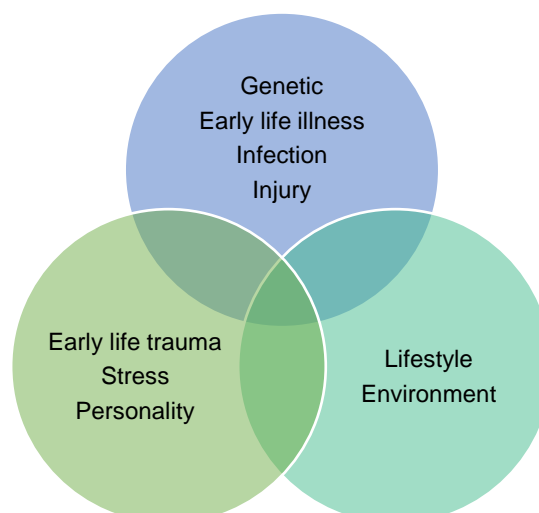
The biopsychosocial model is an attempt to move forwards from this medical model.

What is the Biopsychosocial Model?

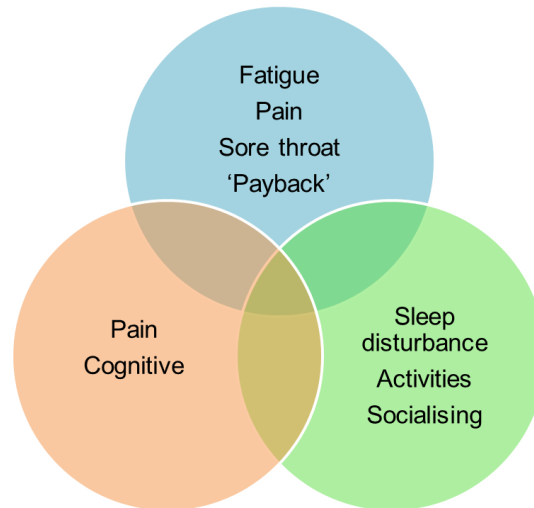
- Proposed by Engel in 1977
- Views a patient as a complete person with a complex life
- Behaviours, thoughts and feelings can influence the physical state
- Includes the medical model factors alongside additional information



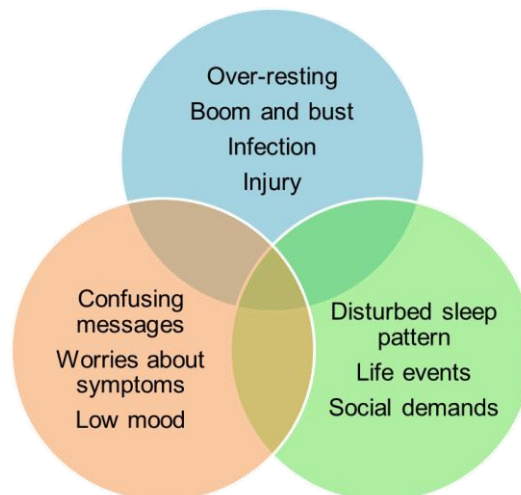
Biopsychosocial Approach to Predisposing Factors and Triggers



## Biopsychosocial Approach to Symptoms



## Biopsychosocial Approach to Maintaining Factors



Another way of showing the factors...

An advantage of the Venn diagram is that it shows the overlap between the different areas and helps remind us that we are looking at a whole person and not a collection of different areas.

	<b>Predisposing</b>	<b>Precipitating</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
<b>Bio</b>	Genetic Early life illness	Infection Injury	Fatigue Pain Sore throat 'Payback'	Over-resting Boom and bust Infection Injury
<b>Psycho</b>	Early life trauma Stress Personality ACEs	Traumatic event Stress	Pain Cognitive Low mood	Confusing messages Worries about symptoms Low mood
<b>Social</b>	ACEs	Lifestyle Environment	Sleep disturbance Activities Socialising	Disturbed sleep pattern Life events Social demands

# The biopsychosocial model of disease

My long-term health conditions are biological in origin, but the impact has been felt physically, psychologically and socially. My long-term health condition can't be treated just through the biological medical model alone. . . .



pathology  
disease  
symptoms  
science  
doctors  
treatments  
tests



depression  
stress  
guilt  
anxiety  
identity  
tears



hobbies  
family  
isolation  
money  
career  
friends  
burden

**“The medical support keeps me alive, but it is the psychological and social support that enables me to live.”**