

## Development of PTeR



PTeR, or Psychotherapy Training e-Resources is a comprehensive psychotherapy training website, originally developed in 2005 by Dr. Priyanthy Weerasekera, currently Professor Emeritus in the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences, McMaster University. PTeR was initially created on a WebCT platform to supplement the McMaster Postgraduate Psychotherapy Program, an evidence-based, competency focused psychotherapy program (Weerasekera, 1997).

PTeR was redesigned in 2010 on a Moodle Learning Management System, beta-tested at the University of Southern California and State University of New York, Buffalo, and then licensed for widespread distribution to academic and healthcare institutions, and individual users for continuing education in psychotherapy (Weerasekera, 2013). Many individuals have contributed to the creative content of PTeR. Faculty, learners and staff from McMaster University, York University, the University of Toronto, and others, have all contributed important content to PTeR.

PTeR is currently used around the world by academic institutions, healthcare organizations and by professionals from a variety of health care disciplines. PTeR is also provided free of charge to developing countries in need of such resources.

## Evidence-based teaching methods to enhance learning

PTeR incorporates teaching methods demonstrated in the cognitive science literature to enhance learning. The modeling of psychotherapy techniques in videos enables learners to “see” the active ingredients in specific psychotherapies that lead to change. The virtual therapist provides an interactive method of assessment and learning. Self-assessment questions provide an opportunity to assess competence. And power point seminars provide a review of both the theory and research relevant to each evidence-based psychotherapy.

The key feature of PTeR is that the learner has continuous access to the site which permits on-site learning, case-based learning, continuous and repeated access to the content (which improves memory, information processing and recall), and multiple formats of presentation of content from videos to power point seminars to self-assessments and the virtual therapist. These multiple methods of presentation with continuous access as needed enhances learning.

## Who is PTeR for?

### 1. Students

The psychotherapies are evidence-based treatments for patients with psychiatric disorders and psychological problems. Students in psychiatry, psychology, social work, family medicine, nursing and other allied disciplines receive some form of training in the psychotherapies. Training students in the psychotherapies can be difficult due to inadequate resources, especially in smaller programs.

### 2. Educators

PTeR can assist educators in psychiatry, psychology, social work, and other mental health disciplines to develop comprehensive psychotherapy training programs. PTeR does not provide clinical supervision, and is therefore not a complete training program, but rather an e-resource, to be used in conjunction with existing programs for a well-rounded training experience.

### 3. Mental Health Professionals

PTeR provides easy and convenient access for busy psychiatrists, family physicians, psychologists, social workers, and other allied mental health professionals to remain up to date with current developments in the psychotherapies. Therapy videos illustrate a variety of therapy approaches, modeling specific therapeutic techniques and drawing special emphasis to the therapeutic alliance. PTeR offers PowerPoint seminars for all psychotherapy modules, as well as references, bibliographies, self-help for patients, MCQs to assess knowledge base and "virtual therapist" (VT) scenarios to assess clinical skills.

### PTeR Recognition and Awards

1. American College of Psychiatrists' Award for Creativity in Education, for Psychotherapy Training e-Resources (PTeR), 2013
2. Canadian Psychiatric Association's Paul Patterson Award for Leadership in Creativity and Innovation in Education, 2013 (Awarded to Dr P Weerasekera)

### Institutions who have purchased a license for PTeR since 2010

College of Psychiatrists of Ireland, Ireland  
New South Wales Medical School, Institute of Psychiatry, NSW  
Stanford University, Stanford, CA  
Brown University, Providence, RI  
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA  
University of Massachusetts, Berkshire, MA  
University of Colorado, Denver, CO  
State University of New York (SUNY), Buffalo, NY  
SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY  
Case Western Medical Center, Cleveland, OH  
New York Medical College, Westchester, NY  
Southern Illinois University, Springfield, IL  
Medical College of Wisconsin, Madison, WI  
Nassau University, Long Island, NY  
Henry Ford Health System, Detroit, MI  
Samaritan Mental Health, Corvallis, OR  
University of Oklahoma, Tulsa, OK  
University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS  
Zucker-Hillside, Hofstra North Shore Medical School, Glen Oaks, NY  
Dartmouth Medical College, Maine  
University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, Canada  
University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK  
University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada  
University of Western Ontario, London, ON, Canada  
Queens University, Kingston, ON, Canada  
Dalhousie University, St. John, NB, Canada  
University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada  
Memorial University, St. John's Nfld, Canada  
McGill University, Montreal, QC, Canada  
McMaster University Family Practice Residency Program  
McMaster University, Psychology Undergraduate Program  
McMaster University, Occupational Therapy Program  
Department of Psychiatry, University of Colombo Sri Lanka (complimentary)  
United Arabs University, Zayed. UAE  
University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada

University of Tanzania, Tanzania (complimentary)  
University of Cape Town, South Africa

### References

1. Weerasekera P. Postgraduate Psychotherapy Training: Incorporating Findings from the Empirical Literature into Curriculum Development. *Academic Psychiatry* 1997; 21: 122-132
2. Weerasekera P. Psychotherapy Training e-Resources (PTeR): On-line psychotherapy education. *Academic Psychiatry* 2013; January, 51-54