

Supplemental Digital Appendix 1

Example Prompts for the Personal Letter and Interview Day Writing Samples, Drawn From the 2020–2021 Selection Cycle of Candidates to the General Adult Psychiatry Residency Program at the University of Toronto

Personal Letter Prompts

Please provide a letter of interest (700 words max) to support your application to Psychiatry at the University of Toronto. We are interested to hear more about what draws you to considering psychiatry as a career and some of the experiences that have shaped your trajectory. Please use the questions below to guide your letter of interest.

Part One (350 words suggested)

- Tell us about yourself and what experiences (e.g., personal, community, academic, etc.), skills, strengths, and/or perspectives you would bring to psychiatry.
- What patient care and/or lived experiences have shaped your path toward choosing psychiatry?
- How have you been informed by or contributed to social justice, equity, and/or engagement with marginalized communities within or beyond medicine? Or how do you see yourself contributing to these issues in the future?

Part Two (350 words suggested)

- From your multiple experiences (e.g., academic, community, personal, etc.), what are some of the notable gaps or challenges in psychiatry you've seen? What is your vision for the future of psychiatry to address these?

These questions were developed by the CaRMs Service User Committee, a diverse group of people with lived experience of mental health and substance use issues who have been involved in resident selection within the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto since 2016. Recognizing that patients are diversely situated and face myriad challenges that intersect with their mental health/addictions (e.g., poverty, racism), we value applicants who have developed a holistic approach to health and wellbeing that attends to oppression, equity and the social determinants of health. Similarly we recognize and value that medical students come from diverse identities, backgrounds, and life experiences and that these unique personal, academic, and community experiences will inform their approach to psychiatric care.

Interview Day Writing Sample Prompt

PROMPT:

Black Lives Matter (BLM) Toronto has called for the City of Toronto to defund the police budget of \$1.076 billion by 50%. Imagine the city has agreed and is interested in re-investing these funds into initiatives that support the mental health and wellbeing of people living in the city. What areas would you reallocate funds to and why?

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please write a response of no more than 700 words.