

Patient story

Taylor, 15, lives with her mother and 13 year old brother Seb, in a rental property in Footscray Victoria. Taylor has not been attending high school classes as she states that she has been feeling extremely stressed out about her studies for the upcoming VET. Taylor also states that she feels people are constantly making fun of her. Taylor says she is dumb because she doesn't understand the preparation and instructions for her school work. She has problems with self-organisation, planning tasks, and memory. She often forgets or doesn't quite understand what she needs to do at school (eg, she doesn't understand the teacher's instructions, especially if they are long and include multiple steps/commands), she finds it hard to remember what she needs to do (eg, she forgets which books she needs to take with her to different classes, she loses things easily), and she forgets what homework she has to do (this is often because she hasn't understood the teacher's instructions and/or because she hasn't written down all of the homework task – she has difficulty taking notes and needs extra time to process information). Taylor stated that she gets very confused when reading and writing, she states that all she can visualise are the letters forming words and most of the time it often doesn't make sense to the context of what she is trying to read. Taylor stated that it was almost like the sequencing of the letters that form words rearrange to become another word (i.e. "reverse" becomes "reserve"). She has problems with reading and spelling words (her spelling is inconsistent). She is a slow reader, and by the time she gets to the end of reading a sentence, she has often forgotten what she read and she has difficulty with reading comprehension (difficulty understanding what she has read). She also finds it hard to listen and concentrate, especially in background noise (such as in a noisy classroom). Taylor gets frustrated when trying to read, write and explain herself. She doesn't have problems pronouncing words, but she has trouble putting her thoughts into words (ie, she often has trouble finding the right words to say and she finds it hard to explain what she is thinking). This impacts on her social abilities and her interaction with others – she finds it hard to get along with other people (she finds it hard to make friends and maintain friendships) and is rejected by peers.

Taylor also expressed that she feels extremely self-conscious when she has to inject herself with insulin while at school. Taylor believes that her inability to cope with her school work and her health issues are the reason why no one likes her and her peers call her a freak and make nasty comments to her most of the time. Taylor has low self-esteem and dislikes being at school..

Taylor stated it all became too much with the pressure of the exams, other kids teasing her, not understanding what was required of her in the preparation of the exams, and generally feeling unwell, she said she doesn't feel like doing anything, has no interest at all, the only thing that felt good was an overwhelming urge to hurt herself...to cut herself

During Taylor's initial acute admission it was established /diagnosed that Taylor has an emerging personality disorder-

Taylor was re admitted to the psychiatric unit for 1 week, where she was transferred to the adolescent Mental Health facility as an inpatient. Taylor was transferred from the acute ward where she has made a remarkable recovery from self inflicted lacerations to her left wrist and hand. The wounds to her left hand and wrist required 5 sutures. Taylor has good range of movement and sensation in her left hand and a crepe bandage remains Insitu for support and comfort.

Taylor also has Type 1 Diabetes, which up until her acute admission was not managed well resulting in Taylor having many hypoglycaemic events.

Initially it was noted that Taylor did not adhere to her Diabetes regime and it was further noted that Taylor had great difficulties in reading the literature on her Diabetes Care plan. Taylor stated that she doesn't care much about her diabetes management and that she hates that she has to inject herself; she wishes everyone would just leave her alone.

The diabetes nurse was able to help Taylor with education and a greater understanding of the importance of effectively managing her diabetes.

Since the self inflicted wrist wounds, Taylor's mother (Anna) has stated that she is very concerned for Taylor's mental health and wellbeing. Taylor's mother states she is very concerned about Taylor and fears she may do something really terrible- worse than slashing her wrists/hand.

Taylor's mother also stated that she feels she is constantly "nagging" Taylor to get up and do something- she feels that she is continually "at" Taylor- she also states Taylor is generally withdrawn from "life" Taylor spends the vast majority of her time alone in her bedroom, watching TV.

Anna also states that Taylor has in general been a difficult child to deal with throughout her childhood. Although she is absolutely devastated by Taylor's self-harm, it certainly has not come as a surprise as she has been unsettled and different since she was a young child. Anna stated that Taylor has a distrust of people, frequent mood swings; she has an explosive temper, poor impulse control and has great difficulties in making and then maintaining friendships- she barely gets along with her brother. Mrs Swift states that Taylor has not been settled or a "usual" kid since, around the time of divorcing Taylor's father eight years ago.

Background information about the patient

Who are they? Taylor Swift

Where do they live? Footscray Victoria

Do they work? Year 10 School Student

Who do they live with? Mother and Brother

Who are the significant people/ things in their life? Mother, Brother-

Do they have any hobbies? Her own bedroom tv and internet

Are there any relevant lifestyle factors? Emerging personality disorder probably started to develop around the time of her parents' awful divorce, dyslexia – problems with reading and writing words (i.e rat is seen as art). Taylor also has type 1 diabetes and is insulin dependent. She injects 5 units @ 8.am and 8pm daily.

If any of the above information is not integral to the scenario, you may direct the actor to improvise this information

Physical characteristics

What do they look like? A little untidy no makeup, Taylor is a recluse and doesn't have friends.

How do they move? She can move freely with the exception of her left hand which is still a little sore.

Do they have any disabilities / impairments? Dyslexia and emerging personality disorder

If any of the above information is not integral to the scenario, you may direct the actor to improvise this information

Patient's affects/ behaviours

How are they feeling at the moment? Angry/sad she wanted to hurt herself. She is teased at school all the time because she is so far behind on school work- she can't even read properly. She is also teased about having to inject herself prior to PE or swimming classes. Low self-esteem.

What sorts of behaviours are they exhibiting? Moody, sometimes sarcastic maybe even angry- as the scenario progresses she is becoming more amenable to the help.

Patient's current concerns

What are they currently thinking about? Feeling alone, different, isolated, frustrated, trapped inside.

What is important to them at the moment? Not much really- feel as if everything is just so difficult to deal with – stupid school, diabetes, everything is just so damn hard!!

Patient Name: Taylor Swift.

Diagnosis: Paediatric Mental Health.

Character Brief

Patient's history of the problem

From the patient's perspective, what has happened to them? Taylor knows that she was admitted to the Psych unit because of self harm

What procedures have they had? Taylor required sutures to herself inflicted wound on her left hand and wrist

What health professionals have they seen? Nurse and Doctors in the acute setting

If using medical jargon, please explain each term.

Patient's past medical history

Do they have any health conditions? Diabetes type 1, Emerging personality disorder

What treatment do they have for these conditions? Insulin for diabetes- nothing else yet for mental health

How long have they had these conditions for? Diabetes has been for two years –Dyslexia was 3 years ago and Mental health has been the last 12 months or so

If on any medications – what do they look like (include photo if appropriate)? How often do they take them and how many do they take?

If any allergies – what is the allergic response? None

Do they smoke? Do they drink? Yes Taylor currently smokes 12 cigarettes a day. She has done so for the past two year she consumes 8-10 standard alcoholic drinks per week usually the pre mixed type

Patient's family medical history

none

Scenario prompts

Are there any cues they need to watch out for? n/a

Should their behaviour change after a certain event? As the scenario progresses Taylor becomes more amenable to the help and suggestions on offer

Other relevant information

Taylor is a troubled young girl who is quite angry sometimes and quite teary at other times. She has major self image issues, low self-esteem and is acutely aware that she is "dumb".