Field Visit to Antara Psychiatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre: A Journey into Clinical Learning

Date: 30th July, 2026

Time: 10:00a.m – 2:00p.m.

Venue: Antara Psychiatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre

Organized By: Department of Psychology

As part of the postgraduate curriculum, the Department of Psychology, Loreto College (Autonomous), organized an educational field visit to Antara Psychiatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre, Kolkata, on 30th July 2026. The visit was designed to provide students with meaningful clinical exposure and an opportunity to witness the practical application of psychological principles within a psychiatric setting. It served as a bridge between theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and the realities of mental healthcare practice.

The visit commenced with an informative orientation session conducted by Aneeta Brooks, Managing Member of Antara, who introduced students to the institution's philosophy, multidisciplinary model of care, and holistic approach to psychiatric treatment and rehabilitation. The session emphasized the importance of compassion, dignity, ethical responsibility, and patient-centred care in the field of mental health. Students also gained an understanding of the hospital's commitment to promoting recovery through integrated medical, psychological, social, and rehabilitative interventions.

Before entering the wards, students participated in a brief deep-breathing exercise, reinforcing the importance of emotional regulation, mindfulness, and professional preparedness before engaging with patients in clinical settings. This thoughtful practice highlighted the need for self-awareness and emotional composure while interacting with individuals experiencing psychological distress.

The hospital tour was guided by Zeeyan Islam, who familiarized the students with the various facilities and services offered at Antara. The students visited different psychiatric wards, the Occupational Therapy Centre, the Play Therapy Room, rehabilitation units, and other therapeutic spaces. Detailed explanations were provided regarding ward management, patient admissions, treatment planning, rehabilitation programmes, recreational activities, and the coordinated efforts of the multidisciplinary mental health team in facilitating patient recovery.

One of the most valuable aspects of the visit was the opportunity to interact directly with patients under professional supervision. Students, working in small groups, were first briefed by the ward staff regarding each patient's background, presenting concerns,

treatment history, and behavioural considerations before conducting brief clinical interactions. These interactions offered valuable insights into the lived experiences of individuals receiving psychiatric care while reinforcing the ethical principles of empathy, confidentiality, and respectful communication.

Throughout the visit, students encountered a wide range of psychiatric presentations, including psychotic disorders, mood disorders, behavioural disturbances, neurological conditions with psychiatric manifestations, and substance use disorders. Several patients shared their experiences of hospitalization, treatment, recovery, family relationships, and personal challenges. Observing differences in mood, affect, speech, cognition, insight, and thought processes enabled students to appreciate the diversity and complexity of mental health conditions while strengthening their observational and interviewing skills.

A visit to the Occupational Therapy Centre demonstrated the role of structured therapeutic activities in enhancing functional independence, cognitive abilities, creativity, vocational skills, and social participation. Similarly, the Play Therapy Room provided insight into child-centred therapeutic interventions that facilitate emotional expression, behavioural assessment, and psychological healing through play. These experiences reinforced the understanding that effective psychiatric care extends beyond pharmacological treatment and embraces a comprehensive biopsychosocial approach.

The programme concluded with an interactive session led by Souranjali Mitra, Clinical Psychologist, who engaged the students in a thought-provoking discussion on psychiatric case formulation, psychological interventions, rehabilitation planning, and professional ethics. She also introduced students to the therapeutic applications for instance: play therapy and sand therapy, while addressing their queries regarding patient management, clinical skills, and the responsibilities of future mental health professionals. Her practical guidance and clinical insights added immense value to the overall learning experience.

The field visit to Antara Psychiatric Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre proved to be an enriching and transformative academic experience. It offered students an invaluable opportunity to observe psychiatric care beyond textbooks, appreciate the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration, and develop a deeper understanding of the human dimensions of mental illness. More importantly, the experience reinforced that effective psychological practice is rooted not only in scientific knowledge but also in empathy, ethical sensitivity, patience, and respect for the dignity of every individual. The visit remains a significant milestone in our journey towards becoming compassionate and competent mental health professionals.