

SFHHMH99

Establish and agree the therapeutic contract



Overview

This standard is about the importance of providing a secure contract for therapy. It will involve discussing and agreeing the contract with the client in an appropriate way. You will need to discuss the client's expectations and discuss and agree the achievable counselling goals. You will need to be able to explain to the client your legal requirements and duties in relation to your ethical framework and your profession. This standard also involves communication and negotiating any relevant fees.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 understand the importance of providing a secure contract for the therapy, which will include physical environment, meeting arrangements, boundaries, ethics and identify any other specific needs of the client for example language or choice about counsellor identity
- P2 explain your role as a counsellor when contracting with the client in a clear and accessible way using appropriate language
- P3 discuss and agree a counselling contract with the client in writing or verbally as appropriate to your client
- P4 explain clearly and appropriately to your client your theoretical framework and how through this you will address client's needs and issues
- P5 discuss and agree yours and the client expectations when contracting with the client using accessible and appropriate language
- P6 discuss and agree with client achievable counselling goals
- P7 ensure you create appropriate opportunities to facilitate clients in expressing their needs when contracting
- P8 communicate and/or negotiate the level of fees
- P9 negotiate length of therapy and frequency of sessions clearly and appropriately to your client
- P10 explain your legal requirements and duties in relation to your ethical framework and your profession
- P11 explain clearly and appropriately to your client, confidentiality and its boundaries and when and why you might need to seek client consent
- P12 understand when and how you may involve others and if there are any issues of client consent
- P13 explain clearly and appropriately to your client when and how you may involve others and how you will involve the client
- P14 obtain client's informed consent to engage in counselling
- P15 identify and address issues of difference and diversity in the counselling relationship
- P16 recognise cultural and power differences and how these can undermine the therapeutic alliance

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 theoretical perspective of counselling
- K2 theory and practice related to contracting for counselling
- K3 emerging scientific evidence relating to human behaviour
- K4 general research, risk factors and guidelines on suicide prevention
- K5 clear communication both verbally and in writing with clients when contracting
- K6 recognising and empowering clients' preferred ways of communication during contracting
- K7 mental health legislation
- K8 relevant legal, national, ethical and organisational requirements, policies and codes of practice
- K9 anti-discriminatory practice
- K10 your own values, principles and prejudices and their implications for your practice
- K11 legal issues regarding informed consent particularly for minors and others unable to consent legally for example Gillick guidelines
- K12 referral procedures

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning

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