

## SFHPT15

### Explore with the client how to work within the therapeutic frame and boundaries



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#### Overview

This standard shows how, in establishing and maintaining the therapeutic frame and boundaries, the therapist creates a learning opportunity in which previously unconscious aspects of the client's experiences, feelings and understandings can emerge. The therapist has the responsibility for agreeing the parameters for the therapy, maintaining clear limits and dealing with risks to the client arising from the client's difficulties and their experience of the therapeutic relationship.

This standard describes therapeutic practice that has been shown to benefit individual adult clients engaged in therapy for healthcare reasons (see reference in the additional information section on page 7). To apply this standard, practitioners also need to take account of the multiple problems and complex co-morbidities that individual clients may bring to therapy.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that they are receiving supervision and that their practice reflects up to date information and policies. This standard should be understood in the context of the Digest of National Occupational Standards for Psychological Therapies.

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#### Performance criteria

*You must be able to:*

- P1 consider the viability, setting, length, frequency of meeting and format of the therapy in the light of:
  - P1.1 the current formulation of the client's difficulties
  - P1.2 developmental factors
  - P1.3 the client's psychological state and the nature and level of risks associated with it
  - P1.4 the client's social and economic situation and family context
  - P1.5 the client's expressed needs and preferences
- P2 explore the client's external context psychodynamically while evaluating the need for any additional resources
- P3 agree with the client clear parameters within which the therapy will take place
- P4 identify any imminent risk to the client or you, the therapist, and make this initially the primary focus of intervention
- P5 identify and discuss changes in therapeutic boundary or framework with client before any changes to the agreed parameters are made
- P6 explore with the client the meaning for them of any planned or unplanned changes to the agreed setting
- P7 make an intervention or interpretation about what the client has conveyed or communicated about their experience of separations or discontinuities in the therapeutic frame
- P8 allow the emergence of the client's conscious and unconscious experience of the setting and its boundaries
- P9 respond to the client's requests for modifications to the parameters of the therapy on the basis of your evaluation of the meaning of those requests
- P10 respond to the client's requests for personal information about you on the basis of your evaluation of the meaning of those requests
- P11 choose your responses to the client's reaction to the setting so that their experience of unverballed feelings and unconscious conflicts is not intensified in a way that threatens the viability of the therapy
- P12 manage forms of acting out in relation to the setting psychodynamically
- P13 take into account transference implications when you need to make boundaries explicit
- P14 enable the emergence of the client's conscious and unconscious responses to breaks and an opportunity for a valuable intervention in advance of planned interruptions in the therapy
- P15 identify risks to the client or others during breaks in the therapy and make necessary arrangements for additional support
- P16 refrain from using your therapeutic relationship to exploit the client's trust or vulnerability or for your own personal advantage

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- P17 work within an ethical framework at all times
- P18 use supervision to identify potential or actual risk of boundary violations and to help you reflect on the meaning of forms of acting out within the psychoanalytic/dynamic setting
- P19 identify when personal problems or illness threaten your capacity to work effectively or ethically and seek appropriate personal help

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#### Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

#### Frame and boundaries

- K1 the meaning of boundaries for the client, the therapist, the therapeutic relationship and the therapeutic process
- K2 the impact of all aspects of physicality on the relationship with the therapist
- K3 interruptions in the therapy and their impact
- K4 the dynamics of attachment, separation, loss and mourning as the basis for understanding the client's subjective experiences
- K5 how to manage challenges and breaking of boundaries
- K6 the dynamics of dependence and counter-dependence in therapeutic settings

#### Risk

*You need to know and understand:*

- K7 the potential for, and mechanisms of, exacerbation of problems for the client in therapy if boundaries are not maintained
- K8 causes and triggers of self harm and violence to others in the context of boundary violations
- K9 potential negative effects of the exploration of transference and counter-transference phenomena
- K10 how to balance the risks around the exploration of transference and counter-transference phenomena
- K11 how to use supervision in reducing the risks from the exploration of transference and counter-transference phenomena
- K12 how to assess the client's capacity to engage in the analytic process in the context of assessment of risk
- K13 causes and triggers of withdrawal from therapy

#### Interpretation

*You need to know and understand:*

- K14 the aims and work of interpretation
- K15 the collaborative process of interpretation

#### Work in the transference

*You need to know and understand:*

- K16 the forms of transference
- K17 how to develop and work in the transference
- K18 when and how to formulate dominant transference themes from the client's assessment
- K19 how to make a transference interpretation
- K20 the emotional impact of transference interpretations

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K21 the rationale and features of the analytic setting and stance

#### **Work in the countertransference**

*You need to know and understand:*

- K22 the forms of countertransference
- K23 how to reflect on and consider countertransference
- K24 how to make appropriate use of countertransference
- K25 when and when not to interpret from countertransference

#### **Working with defences**

*You need to know and understand:*

- K26 psychoanalytic conceptions of the nature, processes and purposes of unconscious defences and how to identify them
- K27 how to gauge the effects and implications of the client's psychological functioning on their personality presentation
- K28 the role of anxiety and defences in rendering some interpretations ineffective or destructive
- K29 how to adopt and maintain an analytic stance when boundaries are threatened

#### **The rationale for an analytic/dynamic approach**

*You need to know and understand:*

- K30 the transference relation, being the focus of the therapy
- K31 the rationale for an psychoanalytic/dynamic approach
- K32 the rationale for closely tracking the psychotherapeutic process
- K33 how to adopt a non directive stance in relation to the client's communications
- K34 how to promote the exploration of the client's unconscious with sensitivity to the client's external reality and value systems
- K35 the importance of maintaining an open mind during psychotherapy
- K36 the factors indicating suitability of an psychoanalytic/dynamic approach
- K37 practice-based indications and contra-indications suggesting appropriateness of different forms of psychoanalytic/dynamic therapy
- K38 when and to what extent the existence of external resources available to support the client may be necessary during psychotherapy
- K39 how to assess the client's on-going capacity to engage in the psychoanalytic/dynamic process in the context of assessment of risk
- K40 how to adopt a non directive stance in relation to the client's communications

#### **Interpersonal and reflective skills**

*You need to know and understand:*

- K41 psychoanalytic conceptions of different interpersonal styles of relating
- K42 skills of clarification

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K43 skills of confrontation

K44 the significance of the therapist's own experience of psychotherapy and self-knowledge

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### Additional Information

#### External links

This standard is derived from research reported in Lemma A, Roth A D and Pilling S (2009) *The competences required to deliver effective Psychoanalytic/ Psychodynamic Therapy*. Centre for Outcomes Research & Effectiveness (CORE) University College London.

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

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**Relevant occupations** Health, Public Services and Care; Health and Social Care; Health Professionals; Healthcare and Related Personal Services

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**Suite** Psychological Therapies

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