SFHPT31
Promote constructive patterns in relationships within and across systems

Overview

This standard is about change that the client wants facilitating the client in systemic therapy to change patterns of beliefs, emotions, attitudes and behaviour within and across contexts in order to improve the relationship the different people have with each other. It is a collaborative process and involves facilitating open communication and the engagement of the relevant people within a therapeutic alliance in order to find ways of promoting effective interaction patterns.

This standard describes therapeutic practice that has been shown to benefit families and other clients engaged in family and systemic therapy (see reference in the additional information section on page 6). To apply this standard, practitioners also need to take account of the multiple problems and complex co-morbidities that clients may bring to therapy. Family and systemic therapy should be offered as part of an explicit and structured approach agreed within the treatment team and with the client and the system.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that 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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You must be able to:

P1   help the client and the wider system to reflect and map:
    P1.1   their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, attitudes and patterns of interaction behaviour and stories related to the problem
    P1.2   how the meanings given to these may prevent change

P2   identify with the client:
    P2.1   dominant and subordinate narratives that constrain or enable change
    P2.2   disruptions that may have occurred
    P2.3   openings, resources and exceptions that have been obscure or not been acknowledged and permit new possibilities

P3   enable the client to:
    P3.1   identify historical and trans-generational factors that constrain, promote or maintain change
    P3.2   reframe their constraining ideas and re-label ideas and descriptions of the problem in a positive way
    P3.3   give the problem a positive external identity

P4   co-construct new ideas and narratives with the client that can accommodate contradictions and uncertainties

P5   encourage the client to draw on their resources and views from the wider system and transfer knowledge and skills from their successes and solutions to other problems

P6   explore with the client the potential implications of changes in beliefs and or behaviours for their life and the individuals in it

P7   identify and amplify change in a way that focuses on the client's actions, resources and their impact in their own lives as well as within the wider system

P8   encourage the client and wider system to talk together at times with less reliance on you as facilitator when you consider there to be an opportunity for therapeutic gain

P9   enhance the client's agency within their situation in a way that strengthens the client's ability to influence their own life and their relationships in a direction they prefer

P10   generate and strengthen alternative narratives which maintain preferred changes in the emotions, beliefs and relationships of the client's life

P11   elicit and attend to feedback from the client to maintain interventions that are acceptable and useful

P12   recognise self reflexively the impact of your own ideas, thoughts and feelings about solutions

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Knowledge and understanding

Systemic approaches that enable therapeutic change

You need to know and understand:

K1   the role systems can play in psychological problems and health

K2   how patterns of interaction and relationships within systems contribute to and maintain psychological, social, relational and cultural problems and health

K3   explanations of how changes in any part of the system may have an impact on the rest of the system

K4   how members of the system make use of resources that promote resilience and maintain change

K5   psychological, social, relational and cultural problems that arise from lack of fit between attempted solutions and the current contexts

K6   how systems develop helpful and unhelpful patterns of interaction and meaning systems and narratives

K7   how to use the members of the system and the system as a whole as a resource for the promotion and maintenance of change

K8   how the therapist, colleagues and the broader professional system interact with, and form part of, the system with which they are working

K9   the role of historical and trans-generational factors, stressful life events and their impact on family functioning in the development and maintenance of psychological disturbance, health and recovery

K10 how families responds to presenting problems and become organised by them

K11 the relationship of responses and subsequent organisation to historical and current pattern of relationships

K12 the development, maintenance and resolution of psychological disturbance within patterns of relationships

Specific systemic techniques

You need to know and understand:

K13 the theory and use of circular questioning techniques and skills

K14 the construction of various methods of system mapping

K15 how to reframe problem descriptions and externalising problems

K16 how and when to use enactment techniques

K17 how and when to use problem solving techniques

K18 how and when to adopt a challenging perspective

The therapeutic relationship

You need to know and understand:

K19 ethical, non-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practices

K20 how to form and maintain collaborative relationships in age and culturally

appropriate ways with everyone in the system

K21 how to make use of self and relational reflexivity to enhance therapeutic relationships

K22 the impact of personal and professional narratives on the therapeutic process

Basic principles and rationale of systemic approaches

You need to know and understand:

K23 the various systemic models and other related concepts and their limitations

K24 theories of systemic change and clients' theories of change

K25 the assumptions contained in the various systemic models

K26 how to develop an account of patterns in relationships in families and wider systems

K27 family based attachment theories across the life cycle from a systemic perspective

Systemic principles that inform the therapeutic approach

You need to know and understand:

K28 the range of contexts in which the client needs to be viewed

K29 how the contexts manifest and constitute the system of significance

K30 the personal, family and cultural factors and interactions between those factors that shape the individual

K31 ways in which people understand themselves and the world around them

K32 the influence of power relationships and different socio-cultural contexts on the development of meaning, relationships and behaviour for the client and the therapist

K33 the influence of varied individual accounts of the same event on relationships and understanding in the system

K34 the influence of recursive cycles of feedback on systems and individuals' narratives, beliefs, emotions, feelings, actions, interactions and relationships

Risk

You need to know and understand:

K35 the assessment of risks to individuals and the risks they pose to others in a range of settings

K36 current legislation and local guidelines and procedures about child and vulnerable adult safeguarding

K37 the relevant professional systems of health care, social care, local authority and education applicable to safeguarding

K38 how to balance the risk or safety and opportunity in therapeutic interventions

K39 ethical issues of valid consent for all members of a system

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Additional Information

External links

This standard is derived from research reported in Roth, A., Pilling, S. and Stratton, P (2009) *The competences required to deliver effective Systemic Therapies* 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):

Dimension: To be confirmed
Planned Review Date: 2014

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Developed by	Skills for Health
Version number	1
Date approved	June 2010
Indicative review date	June 2012
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Skills for Health
Original URN	PT31
Relevant occupations	Health, Public Services and Care; Health and Social Care; Health Professionals; Healthcare and Related Personal Services
Suite	Psychological Therapies
Key words	Family, systemic, therapy, mental health, psychological therapy psychotherapy, counselling, systems, therapeutic, patterns, collaboration.