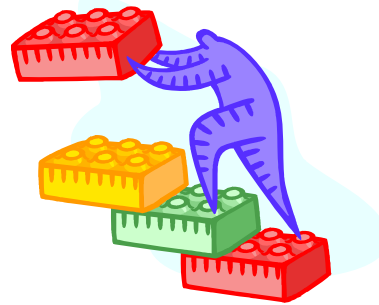


Development of an Individual Treatment Plan

The development of an Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) involves a series of actions and/or steps that build upon each other. These include:

- Data Gathering
- Problem Selection
- Defining Problem
- Goal Development
- Objective Development and
- Treatment Strategy Creation



Initial Action – Data Gathering

Data gathering is the initial action of the ITP process, and is done during the comprehensive diagnostic assessment. Data comes from social history, clinical interview, psychological testing, physical exam and contact with people who are significant to the client (e.g., parents, siblings, teachers, spiritual leaders).

The information and symptoms presented during the data gathering process along with the clinician's knowledge of DSM-IV criteria contribute to a valid diagnosis. In addition to using data to determine diagnoses, the clinician can use the information to understand the client's perspective as to the priority of identified problems, how the client is coping, what their strengths are and whether or not the client is willing to participate and cooperate in a treatment process.

Second Action – Problem Selection

An effective ITP should only deal with a few selected problems or treatment will lose its focus. In situations where many problems need to be resolved through treatment, it is the clinician's responsibility to determine which problems present a risk for the client or others and may need priority. It is also the clinician's responsibility to find out what the client identifies as the most significant problems. Armed with this information the client and clinician should prioritize the identified problems and decide what to work on in the next 30 – 90 days.

Third Action – Defining Problem

Every client presents with unique nuances in how problems are revealed socially and emotionally in their lives. Therefore, each problem must be defined in a way that uses the client's unique baseline to show how treatment will reduce symptoms evidenced in the client's life.

Fourth Action – Goal Development

Goal statements indicate desired outcomes of treatment. The desired outcomes are broad goals for the resolution of target problems.

Fifth Action – Objective Development

Objectives should be stated in short-term, behaviorally measurable terms. Anyone reading the objective should be able to tell that it is a step toward obtaining the broad treatment goal(s). Objectives should specify how both the clinician and client will know when the client has achieved the established objective, and should provide target dates for achievement.

NOTE: The clinician must exercise professional judgment when deciding which objectives are most appropriate for each individual client.

Sixth Action – Treatment Strategy Creation

Treatment strategies are the interventions designed to help the client implement and complete the objectives. The strategy should be based on the client's needs. Identification of who is responsible for implementing the strategy is critical when treatment is done by a team or multiple agencies. If a provider is unable to meet the therapeutic need of the client (not within a provider's scope of practice or repertoire) then the client should be referred to another provider.

