

The Elements of Effective Treatment Planning

Person-centred

A person-centred plan considers the client's values, culture, concerns and expectations in order to achieve their identified goals.

Shared decision-making between the person and clinician works best. Use welcoming and engaging strategies to build a relationship with the person that makes them feel safe, comfortable and respected.

The person (and their family, if appropriate) should be involved in their treatment planning and identifying goals for recovery.

Trauma informed Care

Trauma informed care recognizes that it is common for people who use mental health and addiction services to have experienced trauma. This trauma may greatly influence their ability or willingness to engage with service providers or programs for help.

Trauma informed care does not require that the person disclose a trauma. Instead, service and care providers must use practices based on trauma awareness:

- Promote a sense of safety and trustworthiness by being respectful, honest, clear and responsive.
- Provide opportunities for choice, collaboration and connection.
- Use strengths-based and skill-building approaches.
- Listen to the person's story, acknowledge their emotions and validate their experiences.

Recovery-focused

A recovery-focused perspective acknowledges that recovery is a person-driven process, which will mean different things to different people.

The United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration defines recovery from mental disorders and substance use disorders as:

“A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”

Some recovery-focused approaches include:

- Have the person identify what recovery means to them.
- Recognize that recovery is a journey and is unique to each person.
- Quote the person when writing out their goals.
- Collaborate and have the person sign the goals they have set.
- Have the person choose the interventions they feel will work for them.

Motivation-based

To effectively treat concurrent disorders, interventions should be related to the person's motivation for change.

Tailor interventions to the person's motivation level and stage of change. A person's motivation may change at different stages of treatment for concurrent disorders. Be aware of stage-matched interventions to guide the person in their treatment options.

Evidence-informed

Clinically relevant research and best practices in treatment approaches should be used to inform the treatment options that are the most effective, safe and relevant. Stay up to date on best practice guidelines and interventions for specific concurrent disorder diagnosis.

Clinical expertise may also be required to guide the development of an integrated treatment plan, bringing clinical skills and past experience to identify and treat each person's unique state and diagnosis.

Social determinants of health

We all need to understand the social determinants of health and health inequities, such as:

- Income and social status
- Social support networks
- Education
- Employment/working conditions
- Social environments
- Physical environments
- Personal health practices and coping skills
- Healthy child development
- Gender
- Culture

Ongoing support in these areas will help:

- Maintain treatment successes
- Ensure the person's basic needs are being met
- Prevent the person returning to substance use

Ask the person about possible barriers that might affect their access to treatment. For example, transportation, availability of food, and child care can all impact a person's recovery. Addressing these basic life needs before starting interventions may enable the person to better respond to treatment.

Cultural competency and safety

Cultural competency is the ability to provide effective clinical care to patients from particular ethnic or racial groups. It includes behaviours, attitudes, knowledge, skills and policies that reflect the ability of a system, agency, program or individual to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs and behaviours.

Cultural safety is about power relationships in the health-care setting. Service providers are considered to be the more powerful person in the provider-patient relationship. Recognizing this dynamic is an important element of cultural safety, especially for Indigenous people, who may perceive the hospital or clinic as an intimidating setting.

A culturally safe approach means setting up systems that enable the less powerful to:

- Monitor the attitudes and service of the more powerful
- Comment freely and without repercussions
- Ultimately create useful and positive change that benefits the health-care system and the people we serve

Informed consent

People with concurrent disorders often have their health information and treatment plans shared with supporting services, clinicians or agencies.

When you get informed consent, you must discuss what information may or may not be shared with others. Allow the person to ask questions and make decisions about the sharing of information.

Once the person has made their decision:

- Document the discussion and the decision that was made about sharing information and treatment.
- Have the person sign a consent form stating that they understand that their treatment plan or other information may be shared with other programs.
- Include any specific instructions on sharing information in the treatment plan.