Top 5 Best Clinical Practices for Treatment with Telehealth

Maryellen Evers LCSW, CAADC
1: Consider Ethics & Liability

• Comply with State Licensing Board
• Informed Consent
• Malpractice Insurance
2: Assess Appropriateness

- Ask about your patient’s on-line life
- Digital Native vs. Digital Immigrant
- Not Cookie Cutter
  - Appropriate Diagnosis
  - Dual Diagnosed
  - Suicidal / Homicidal Ideations
  - Medication
3: Enhance Patient Safety

- Inability to Control Environment
- Planning for Emergencies
  - Safe Word
  - Safety Plan
  - Emergency Contact
Safety Plan- Preparing For Session

1. Let someone know your entering a telehealth session
2. Place “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door and prepare your environment
3. Make sure a clock is visible
4. Minimize all of your computer programs (e-mail, chat) and log onto your telehealth platform
5. Adjust your microphone and camera
6. Invite your patient into your virtual session
Safety Plan- During For Session

1. Where are you today (address/location)?
2. If we should get disconnected, what number should I use to reach you?
3. Is anyone else there with you?
   a. If no, begin session.
   b. If yes, who is there with you today?
4. Do you want to continue the session with _______ there with you?
   a. If no, end session.
   b. If yes, can we identify a word you can say to me that means to end the conversation “safe word”?
Safety Plan- Ending Session

1. “End Meeting” as explained through your telehealth platform
2. Take off and unplug headset.
3. Remove “Do not disturb” sign from your door.
4. Let others in your office space know you are off Zoom.
Safety Planning Continued

• Safe Word
  • Used when unable to talk
  • Used when feeling unsafe

• Safety Plan
  • Police information (Don’t rely on 911)
  • Hospital / local clinic
  • ICE contact – don’t forget ROI
5: Be Prepared

- Increased verbalizations
- At a click of a button...
DISCLAIMER: Information exchanged and views expressed during these virtual sessions reflect the professionals’ conducting the session best understanding of the science or promising practices and should not be seen as directives. We encourage all participants to reflect on the context discussed during the learning series and to take that information to colleagues and/or supervisors for further discussion especially in the context of state rules or regulations. Professionals conducting these sessions will not make recommendations regarding specific video conferencing platforms or other technologies. In addition, content related to Privacy and Security and 42 CFR Part 2 presented during these sessions should not be construed as legal advice and participants are directed to discuss recommendations with their agency’s legal counsel. Finally, participants will be referred to SAMHSA resources that provide additional information regarding delivering services virtually.