

Twenty-six Competencies for Direct Care Mental Health Workers

1. Treating clients with respect, dignity and as equal partners in their treatment.
2. Including family members and other supportive people/groups in the client's treatment.
3. Knowing the symptoms/characteristics of mental illness.
4. Responding to cultural, racial, and gender issues that affect clients.
5. Knowing the uses and side effects of psychiatric medication.
6. Knowing the biological nature of mental illness.
7. Knowing and using the best types of therapy for general mental illnesses.
8. Knowing and using the best types of therapy for people with a forensic status.
9. Knowing and using the best types of therapy for people with a substance abuse/mental illness.
10. Knowing and using the best types of therapy for people with a mental illness/mentally retarded (MI/MR) diagnosis.
11. Knowing and using the best types of therapy for children/adolescents with severe emotional disorders.
12. Knowing and using crisis interventions.
13. Knowing and using recovery principles and practices.
14. Developing and putting into practice Individual Service Plans (ISP) and Individual Treatment Plans (ITP).
15. Using community resources effectively.
16. Being a client advocate.
17. Knowing about legal issues, client rights, and ethical issues.
18. Working well as a member of an interdisciplinary team.
19. Working in a professional way.
20. Evaluating one's own work performance.
21. Keeping accurate work related records.
22. Knowing and being able to use first aid, CPR, and other ways to keep clients and workers safe.
23. Providing basic nursing care, including taking vital signs and helping clients use the bathroom.
24. Using different ways to reduce worker stress.
25. Knowing basic facts of good nutrition.
26. Using computer technology.