

Cultural and Other Barriers
Affecting Access to Mental
Healthcare for Individuals
with Hearing or Vision loss

Presenters

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The #1 goal of the intake process is to establish a strong and effective relationship with the client

What the Rehab Counselor seeks to accomplish in the first interview:

- Establish Good Rapport
- Get the consumer's story
- Learn the effect of the disability on independence and work
- Help that person to trust the process and move out of the comfort zone
- Develop a plan to gain independence, employment, and self sufficiency.

Hear Impairment vs. HH vs Deaf

- Do not call a person hearing impaired or say he/she has hearing impairment
- These labels imply person is broken
- Appropriate terms are deaf, hard of hearing, or person with hearing loss

Working with ASL interpreter

-Interpreter is a professional. Do not ask interpreter to be personal assistant to the person. Only ask the interpreter to facilitate communication.

-Look directly at the person with whom you're communicating-not the interpreter

Working with ASL interpreter

- Address the person directly. Don't speak about the person to the interpreter.
- Don't give handouts or paperwork to the interpreter. Give them to the person.
- Speak at a normal pace. The interpreter will let you know if you need to slow down.

Considerations for Deaf/HH

- Age of onset
- Pre-lingual, post lingual, late deafened
- Cause of hearing loss
- Family communication and relationships at home
- Social interactions in community
- Social Development
- Education

Considerations for Deaf/HH

- Ask about preferred method of communication

Only speech (oral, lip reading)

Simultaneous Communication

(sign+speech)

ASL/PSE/SEE

Gestures

UniDo, Tablet, other technology

Old fashioned paper and pen

“Setting the Stage”

- Face to Face
- Quiet environment with little/no back ground noise
- Good lighting
- Don't position yourself in front of light source (light, window)
- Get person's attention before communicating
- Provide business card

Communication Strategies

- Always communicate directly with the person
- Speak slowly and clearly; don't yell, over exaggerate, or over pronounce
- Short sentences easier than long
- Don't place anything in your mouth while speaking
- Be courteous. Don't talk to others while speaking to person.

Considerations for Blind/LV

- Age of onset. Some are born with vision loss, most acquire vision loss
Different implications dependent on cause or age.
- Type of vision loss will have different implications for what person can or can't do with remaining vision

Considerations for Blind/LV

- Underlying medical conditions, health may not be very stable
- Affect of vision loss/health issues on family
- Trauma of losing vision/grief
- Anxiety: fear of inability to care for self and others
- Financial difficulties if unable to work

Considerations for Blind/LV

- Cost of vision loss: medical expenses, loss of income, training, equipment, adaptive equipment, transportation
- High and persistent unemployment rate
- Financial difficulties if unable to work

Considerations for Blind/LV

- Client may be very isolated
- Feeling of helplessness
- May not have been told about any resources, doesn't know where to turn for help
- Difficulty seeing how there will be life after the loss of vision
- Re-learning how to live

Personal Support System

- Do they live with family?
- Do they live independently?
- How do they financially support themselves?
- Does someone help with transportation?
- Is the family supportive of their goals and independence?

Considerations for deafblind

- Order of loss: vision first or hearing first, causes of vision/hearing loss
- Method of communication (oral vs. ASL/Tactile ASL)
- Age of onset of dual sensory loss
- Resources for deafblind
- Specialized assistive technology for dual sensory loss

Considerations for deafblind

- Due to loss of an effective communication system client with dual sensory loss may seem like he or she doesn't understand
- Communication can take a long time and much information is missed

Safety concerns

- Potential to become crime victims
- Travel safety
- Safety factors in the home
- Ability to care for self or evacuate in case of emergency
- Ability to receive emergency notifications

Family Concerns

- Family members don't understand the experience of the person with sensory loss
- Family communication and experiences break down
- Individual with sensory loss further isolated

Intersection of other Cultural Factors with Disability

- National Origin or Ethnicity
- Language
- Religion
- LGBTQ
- How such factors determine family structure, expectations, support system.

Local Resources

- Department of Rehabilitation
- Special Services Division
dedicated to needs of
deaf/HOH and blind/LV and
deafblind
- Vocational services and referral
to senior services (55+ w/VI)

Deafblind support

Helen Keller National Center

Region 9: Southwest

Voice/TTY: 858-578-1600

VP: 858-397-5522

Associate VP: 951-208-6548

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Questions and Answers