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Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Electric Training Modules

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INTRODUCTION
The South Central Crisis Center is a State Operated Services Mental Health facility in Mankato, Minnesota. The center is designed to offer people suffering an acute mental health episode, such as suicidal thoughts, or who need a medication adjustment or other psychiatric services, up to a few days in a safe, secure environment. The center accepts referrals from law enforcement, county or health care professionals in the following counties: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Freeborn, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Rice, Sibley and Watonwan.

Recently, the program has been serving a larger amount of clients who have a diagnosis of Asperger’s Disorder or high functioning Autism. From this program’s perspective, the staff at South Central Crisis Center requested training materials on behavioral traits and learning styles of clients who are diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome and other Pervasive Developmental Disorders.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION
To meet the needs of the clients at the South Central Crisis Center, a literature review was conducted, looking at various studies of behavioral traits and learning styles of adults with Asperger’s Disorder and high functioning Autism. From this literature review an electronic training module was developed. This module consisted of a power point presentation and a learning manual.

To begin the process, a literature review was completed. Literature consisted of evidence-based intervention techniques and interventions that make up this disorder. Literature was based on primarily on adults with Asperger’s Disorder, although some of the findings included adolescent case studies. Literature consisted of:

- Case-studies
- Evidence-based text
- Evidence-based behavioral tools
- Qualitative studies
- Literature reviews

After fully reviewing the literature, a power point and training manual was developed to serve as a training tool for the staff at the South Central Crisis Center. The goal of this tool was to educate the staff on typical behavior and learning styles of adults who have been diagnosed with Asperger’s Disorder. By following the training modules it is hoped that staff will be more comfortable working with people with this diagnosis who present to the South Central Crisis Center.

LITERATURE REVIEW

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MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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FEEDBACK
For the most part feedback on this project was positive. The staff has been wanting some more information to assist in learning more about Asperger’s disorder and most of them felt that this was an appropriate tool to use.

"A great way to learn the basics of this disorder! I’m sure we can use this as a tool to educate our staff for future clients who have Asperger’s!" employee @ SCCC.

"This will be a great tool to use to train all of our current and new staff. These training modules offer explanations of symptoms and behaviors that are associated with people who are diagnosed with Asperger’s. The benefits of understanding a diagnosis can help our clients successfully complete their goals," employee @ SCCC.

RURAL SOCIAL WORK IMPLICATIONS
This project has shown the importance of developing skills and awareness of all clients that are served within a program.

- Enhancing knowledge in specific areas assists in enhancing productivity and usefulness of programs located in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS
- Transforming the power point presentation into a tool that is useful for electronic training with a more interactive presentation.
- Develop a system of measurement for determining the impact of the electronic training module on staff and clients.

RESULTS
- Literature review conducted on 25 evidence based literature.
- Material was taken from this literature and compound into easily retrievable information provided in a training module format.
- The electronic training module was presented to 5 of the staff at the South Central Crisis Center.
- Key learning concepts and Training Module goals:
  - Gain a better understanding of diagnoses that fall under Pervasive Developmental Disorders.
  - Autism
  - Asperger’s Disorder
  - Rett’s Syndrome
  - Childhood Disintegrative Disorder
  - PDD, NOS
- Form an understanding of behavioral and learning traits that are common among individuals who have Asperger’s or High Functioning Autism.
- Learn treatment tools that have proven to be affective when working with adults diagnosed with PDD.

25 journals were reviewed, journals displayed are most recent and most relevant to project design.