

SCPS HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY CONSULTING

Health Professionals: Newly Diagnosed Chronic Conditions



AWAY DAY, EVENT FACILITATION AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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INFO@SCPSCONSULTING.COM

FIRST STEPS TO BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

- This information sheet will provide you with framework for conceptualizing psychological aspects of a new chronic condition diagnosis
- Clinicians' hints and tips
- Model of Psychological adjustment

ADJUSTMENT TO DIAGNOSIS

Some of your clients/ patients are able to make significant changes just by giving them the right information and advice.

So what's wrong with the people who don't make the changes or who can't maintain them?

CLINICIANS HINTS AND TIPS

- Trainees and new clinicians:

You have specific challenges (lack of experience, pressure of getting used to the job) and opportunities (you have the latest training and information; you don't yet have a fixed way of working).

With limited time to speak with your patient/ client it is essential that you identify key standard questions to engage and start a positive relationship.

Try to always remember the impact that a diagnosis of a chronic health condition, which can require lots of lifestyle changes, can have.

Find out more by asking questions about diagnosis and what this means to your client/patient.

Most health behaviours e.g., smoking, exercise, start off serving a function for the person, such as fitting in with others or setting themselves apart.

By the time people receive a chronic disease diagnosis these same health behaviours have been part of their life often for many years or decades. Change comes from tapping into personal motivation.

- All Clinicians:

Leventhal's model of self-regulation (overleaf) can help you to consider what your client/ patient may be going through and how you can use this information to support them to make changes.

LEVENTHAL'S SELF-REGULATION MODEL

What is this model and why is it relevant to me?

This model has been used extensively to describe the process by which an individual interprets, understands, and reacts to chronic illness.

Individuals' responses are guided by three factors:

1. Their representation of the illness experience: on the right side of the page are the factors that influence an individual's representation

This subsequently influences the other factors:

2. Their coping responses and action planning
3. Their appraisal of whether they have achieved their coping goals

How should this affect my work?

Over the past 3 months, for how many of your newly diagnosed client/ patients did you know about all areas of their illness representation?

0	5	10
None	Around half	All my clients

If you answered less than 10 – good news, you could easily improve your assessments: consider using a check-sheet to remind you of the topic headings.

Service Managers: Do you know whether your team reliably gather this information?

TOP TIP: Slight changes in your new-diagnosis assessments could have a significant positive impact on client/ patient engagement, outcomes long-term support needs.

You could use proven illness representation tools.

There are many other hints and tips that we can offer to improve your clinical skills and outcomes.

SCPS Consulting can support you to develop your team's ability to achieve more effective results. We use the following methods:

- **Away Day Events**
- **Event Facilitation**
- **CPD: Bespoke supervision and training**

We are also available to provide service review and improvement as a package including outcomes analysis, recommendation plans, refresher/ re-training.

Identity: the descriptive words that someone chooses to describe their condition and the symptoms e.g., debilitating; manageable. After initial diagnosis, these descriptors continue to develop in response to changes and experiences or may be fixed and limiting efforts for change.

Cause: what that client/ patient thinks about why they have the condition, what the cause may have been. This is based on their own perceptions, information, and beliefs as well as those of family, friends and others they know or from exposure to media and other external influences.

Timeline: beliefs about the condition as they know it in terms of whether it is temporary, permanent, how long it may last and at what intensity and how they feel about that. Again, these can be altered over time as they gain more knowledge from their own experiences.

Consequences: what will the impact of the condition be for them? Will it affect their life at all and to what extent? Does it have consequences on just their health or on other areas of their life.

Curability/controllability: whether there are effective treatments for their condition, do they cure the condition or just manage it? Can they personally impact on their condition through their own actions?

SCPS Health Psychology Consulting LTD:

Expert Health Psychology Clinical Advice
and Facilitation Services

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