WHAT IS A CLINICAL SUPPORT TOOL?
Clinical support tools are educational materials and decision aids for primary care and specialty care providers, patients, and families. The tools deliver evidence-based prevention and treatment information that is consistent with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) clinical practice guidelines for psychological health.

WHY USE CLINICAL SUPPORT TOOLS?
- Quick access to condensed assessment, diagnosis and treatment protocols
- Readily available well researched and professionally developed information about mental health conditions, treatment options, coping strategies, and medications for clients and family members
- Additional referral information and resources for the specific mental health condition
- Tangible hard copy educational material preferred by many patients and family members

HOW DO I KNOW THE TOOLS ARE EVIDENCE-BASED?
A work group of civilian and military subject matter experts develop the psychological health clinical practice guidelines based on the most recent research studies and evidence. The work group also reviews the tools developed by the Psychological Health Center of Excellence (PHCoE) subject matter experts.

WHO DEVELOPS THE TOOLS?
The VA and U.S. Army Medical Command partner with PHCoE to develop the tools. Drafts undergo an iterative review process that includes the VA/DoD work group champions. The Joint Base Lewis-McChord Usability Lab conducts focus groups with target audiences to obtain end-user feedback. Tools are additionally reviewed by the PHCoE Public Affairs Office and are required to meet Americans with Disabilities Act regulatory compliance.

WHERE CAN I FIND THESE TOOLS?
Three ways to obtain copies of the clinical support tools:
- Visit PHCoE’s website www.phcoe.mil
- Visit the clinical practice guideline section of the VA website www.healthquality.va.gov
- Army, Air Force and Navy personnel can order hard copies of the tools on the Army Medical Command Quality Management Office www.qmo.amedd.army.mil

Suicide Risk (2013)
FDA Warning/Regulatory Alert: This guideline references a drug(s) for which important revised regulatory and/or warning information has been released since 2013
- Patient Safety Plan Worksheet — Tool that enables health care providers and patients to collaboratively identify warning signs, sources of support and additional resources
- Suicide Prevention: A Guide for Military and Veteran Families — Fact sheet to educate family members about suicide warning signs, how to access care and recommended

Substance Use Disorder (2015)
- Substance Use Disorder Affects Families — Brochure for family members with facts about SUD and support-focused resources
- Medications for the Treatment of Alcohol Use Disorder — Patient brochure with information on the four most effective medication choices for treating alcohol addiction
- Substance Use Disorder Screening and Treatment Pocket Card* — Quick reference note card for health care providers on algorithms for screening and treating SUD and brief intervention guidance

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Disorder (2017)
A Patient’s Guide: Understanding Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Disorder — Booklet that describes symptoms and treatment options and provides a recovery worksheet and additional resources
- A Family’s Guide to Posttraumatic Stress Disorder — Brochure that describes symptoms and treatment options and offers healthy coping strategies and resources for family members of those diagnosed with PTSD or ASD
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) Pocket Guide — Tabbed pocket guide to help providers assess and diagnose symptoms and treat PTSD and ASD and co-occurring conditions as recommended in the 2017 clinical practice guideline
- A Provider’s Guide to Trauma-informed Care — Fact sheet for health care providers on trauma-informed practices and recommended psychotherapies

WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED?

Major Depressive Disorder (2015)
- Depression: Fact Sheets for Families — Brochure with facts on depression symptoms, causes and effective treatments
- Understanding Depression: A Resource for Providers and Patients — Brochure with information on treatments, medications, and patient worksheets on how to improve sleep and manage symptoms
- Management of MDD Pocket Card* — Quick reference note card for health care providers on treatment algorithms

Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain (2017)
- Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain Pocket Guide — Tabbed pocket guide to help providers assess the risks and benefits of initiating or continuing opioid therapy and recommended strategies for managing tapering, withdrawal and discontinuation
- Opioid Therapy Pocket Card* — Quick reference note card for health care providers on algorithms for assessment, management of treatment and recommended treatment for opioid addiction
- Patient Information Guide: Long-term Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain — Patient booklet that highlights responsible use of opioids, benefits and risks of opioid therapy, and pain self-management tips
- Managing Side Effects and Complications of Opioid Therapy for Chronic Pain — Fact sheet for primary care providers that explains how to properly manage side effects of opioid therapy
- Tapering and Discontinuing Opioids — Brochure for primary care providers with strategies to safely taper, manage withdrawal and discontinue long-term opioid therapy

REFERENCES


*Tools created by VA

The Value of Clinical Support Tools for Social Workers and Their Clients
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