

DIAGNOSIS ERRORS

POSSIBLE REASONS...

- Clients with the same diagnosis do not necessarily function at similar levels. Therefore, much more than a diagnosis should be documented.
- A diagnosis, in itself, does not imply the level of care needed. Therefore, specific client needs must be considered and documented.
- If medical necessity is not documented the client may be denied services by a third-party payer. Therefore, specific problems in functional impairment must be documented.
- Although counseling may be helpful, it does not imply medical necessity. Therefore, it is important to explain to the client that services are not necessarily covered by a third-party.

REASON THAT THE SAME CLIENT RECEIVES DIFFERENT DIAGNOSES

- Multiple disorders, but not all initially detected.
- Incorrect, incomplete, or conflicting previous or current information obtained
- Discrepant cyclical behaviors that are observed at different points in the cycle by different counselors
- Effects of using (or abstaining from) alcohol or drugs
- Medications: effects, level of compliance, changes, interactions, side effects
- Changes in levels and types of environmental stressors that lead to different reactions
- Organic or physical factors affecting psychological conditions
- Counselor's expertise, experience, and theoretical stance
- Level of client's insights, exaggerations, or denial
- Malingering or secondary gain
- Actual changes in diagnosis