

TERMINATIONS – REFERRALS

REASON TO TERMINATE OR MAKE A REFERRAL

The typical reasons termination occurs is when the client and practitioner agree that the:

Client Reasons:

- Client need to be referred: goals of treatment or service have been met
- Client can no longer benefit from treatment/service
- Client needs a higher level of care
- Client needs counseling outside counselor's area of expertise
- Client is no longer benefiting from counseling
- Client may be harmed by the treatment
- Client no longer needs therapy

Counselor Reasons:

- There are conflicts of interest that are unresolvable
- Counselor's objectivity has been compromised
- The client has threaten the counselor

Financial Reasons:

- Financial reasons (Clinicians in fee-for-service settings may terminate services to clients who are not paying an overdue balance)
- Client has changed insurance carriers and counselor is not a preferred provider (and client does not want to pay any extra out-of-pocket charges)

When a referral is made, the referring clinician is obligated to determine the appropriateness of the referral, including the abilities of the receiving professional or agency, and should follow up on the client's progress wherever possible and permitted. Finally, medal health practitioners should continue to refer to their professional association's ethical code guidelines and state laws regarding a related issue: the disposition of client records upon termination, referral, or practice closure.

TERMINATIONS AND TRANSFERS

- Clinicians should make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services in the event that services are interrupted by factors such as unavailability, relocation, illness, disability, or death.
- Clinicians who are leaving an employment setting should inform clients of appropriate options for the continuation of services and of the benefits and risks of the options.
- Clinicians who anticipate the termination or interruption of services to clients should notify clients promptly and seek the transfer, referral, or continuation of services in relation to the clients' needs and preferences.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

- Avoid abandonment
- Clinicians should not terminate services to pursue a social, financial, or sexual relationship with a client

CLIENT TRANSFERS

- When an individual who is receiving services from another agency or colleague contacts clinicians for services, the clinicians should carefully consider the client's needs before agreeing to provide services.
- If another agency or colleague has served a new client, clinicians should discuss with the client whether consultation with the previous service provider is in the client's best interest.

See next page for sample...

Caveat: A Termination Summary form is considered best practice.

SAMPLE

TERMINATION SUMMARY

CAVEAT: For use in your own setting, forms must be personalized to reflect your state's relevant laws, ethical requirements for your licensing, and your own actual policies.

NAME: _____ **DATE:** _____

DATE OF LAST SESSION: _____

Reason(s) for termination:

- The treatment was completed
- This is a planned pause as part of an intermittent long-term treatment
- The client refused to continue in therapy
- There was little or no progress in treatment
- The client needs services not available here, must be referred out.
- Others, _____

Decision to terminate was:

- Client initiated
- Therapist-initiated
- A mutual decision
- Other (specify): _____

Services rendered

- Individual Couple Family Group Other: _____.

General description of Treatment:

- Treatment goals, outcomes and progress: _____
- Clinical impression at termination: _____
- Description of client's state at termination: _____
- Concerns with danger, meds, compliance, etc: _____

Referrals

- Reason for referral(s): _____
- Follow up (Letters, calls, contacts, and future appointments):

Additional comments: _____.