

Conducting Shared Decision-Making for Mental Health Concerns: Strategies for Adults and Youth

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Background: Despite the moral imperative to engage in shared decision-making (SDM) for mental health, doing so presents significant, unique challenges. These include: 1) service users often presenting with co-morbid mental health difficulties, and the complexity of treatment options (pharmacological, psychological and social) for mental health; 2) perceived or actual lack of decisional capacity or capacity to be involved in SDM process; and challenges specific to youth mental health, such as 3) youths' varying developmental levels and cognitive abilities; and that 4) caregivers and guardians are often involved in decision-making, and they may disagree with youth perspectives. Although these challenges will be discussed in the context of mental health treatment, the issues they raise (e.g., understanding of treatment options, competence to participate in treatment planning, navigating SDM with multiple stakeholders) can be extended to the implementation of SDM in a variety of settings.

Learning Objectives: 1) To recognize the importance of incorporating service user perspectives in the treatment planning process for mental health concerns; 2) To identify likely challenges when conducting SDM for mental health with adults and youth; and 3) To gain familiarity with specific techniques and approaches that may facilitate SDM with adults and youth.

Methods: This workshop will integrate didactic and interactive approaches. The first part of the workshop will focus on the rationale for SDM in mental health treatment (and psychosocial treatment in particular), the latest evidence in this area, and common challenges in conducting SDM for mental health concerns. The second part of the workshop will focus on current efforts in the field to design and test SDM for mental health concerns (including the presenters' work). Interactive activities will emphasize the practical application of this work and teach specific skills and approaches to address common challenges. Each presenter has been engaged in the theoretical development and practical application of SDM for mental health, with a special emphasis in youth mental health. Participants will engage in practical exercises to develop basic skills in undertaking SDM discussions in these populations using the techniques that were discussed and demonstrated earlier in the workshop.

Audience: Audience members should have a basic understanding of what SDM is.

Maximum Number of Participants: 25 participants