

Advanced SDM Hotline Assessment

This class focuses on critical thinking and interviewing when making an assessment on the hotline. Attention is paid to using the definitions to get a full picture of what the caller is reporting. Workers will learn a way of critically thinking about what information they need and then what question to ask to get that information. The class will give workers a framework to use when asking questions that will help them think through what information they need to get an accurate assessment and to use the SDM assessment to facilitate that process.

Workers Who Would Attend:

Hotline workers who have previously completed SDM basic training.

Learning Objectives:

- Quick examination of what helps workers successfully use the hotline's policies, procedures, and definitions.
- Learn how using the definitions can help focus interviews with the reporting party and get the needed information.
- Learn different ways to ask questions of the reporting party
- Practice applying definitions to case information

Walk through of the three-hour class:

The class will start with a very brief overview of the fundamental elements of the hotline assessment with an emphasis on common errors. The class uses vignettes to emphasize common mistakes in the hotline tool in both definitions and policy.

Next, the class will address how to use the definitions to focus the phone interview. A model for looking at the parts of the definitions as a way to get more in-depth assessments and to guide the interview will be demonstrated and discussed. Common "hotspot" terms in the definitions will also be explored. Workers will be given a matrix to assist them in knowing what questions to ask in order to determine if the information meets the definitions. Using the matrix, interviewing strategies will be explored. The focus is to really use the definitions as a guide to ensure that the worker gets enough information to decide if the call meets the statutory threshold to become a referral and then how quickly to respond.

The class will conclude with several role-plays where workers can practice the model and interview questions they have learned.

Transfer of Learning ideas:

Before the training:

1. Ask the worker about their experience completing the hotline assessments, what has worked well, what has been challenging?
2. Review with the worker definitions they find difficult. Ask what parts they would like clarity on.
3. Review a definition that has been hard for the unit. Look at the parts of the definitions and discuss how the worker would get the information for each part. What questions might they ask?
4. Ask the worker to bring in a referral that was difficult. Assess the referral carefully using the definitions. See if there was one more question the worker needed to ask to fully answer the definition. Review the documentation. Is the information related to the definition documented?
5. Discuss a case from your own practice where decisions were made based on assumptions rather than facts. Review with the worker how easy it is to make this mistake on the hotline. Discuss strategies for making decisions based on facts.

After the training:

1. Ask the worker what they found most interesting about the class. What were they already doing? What is different than their practice?
2. Ask the worker to bring in a referral. Go through the definitions and see if they have all the links.
3. Review the definitions that were hard for the worker and using the interviewing matrix, have the worker develop questions that will help them get the information they need to meet all the links in the definitions.
4. Review the question matrix with the workers: what questions work, what questions could they add? Share your favorite questions. Put up a question board where workers write their favorite questions.
5. When the worker brings a difficult referral to you, pull out the definitions and draw the circles to represent the links and review if the worker has all the links. Evaluate if they have the facts. Evaluate if any assumptions have been made. Check to see that all the links have been documented.