

Supporting WA State Behavioral Health Providers to Optimize Telehealth in Response to COVID-19

Q&A from BHI Telehealth Training Session #16

Date: July 17, 2020

Title: *Clinical Supervision in Telehealth*

Presenter: *Amanda Focht MD*

Q: Now telehealth is allowing directors/managers to supervise more clinicians as it is more accessible. I have some supervisors worried about liability as they see more and more folks.. do you have any insights into the risks/case loads/community mental health vs private practice? Is there a difference and how do we support the demand for more support without burning out the supervisor and taking some of the fear of liability down...

A: I would clarify exactly what the expectations are for supervisors: are they co-signing notes, are they to be available outside of the supervision hour for emergencies, do they even have time to hear about all of the cases they are supposed to be supervising. Ultimately, it has to be up to the supervisor if they feel comfortable with the number of supervisees they have and the overall caseload. Encourage supervisors to talk with their legal representative/malpractice carrier to discuss their particular liability.

Q: Hello. I work at the quality department in a health insurance organization. One of my roles is to review medical records for our members, when they make complaints regarding health care services provided. Since there is an option for sessions to be recorded, would we be able to review video for our quality concerns?

A: Recording of sessions memorializes the most intimate type of patient material. Recordings would have the same legal protections as psychotherapy process notes, they are distinct from the medical record. Process notes have an extra layer of legal protection.

Q: I am supervising young supervisors. Would love resources of “doing” as I train in the presence/interpersonal pieces of the work. Do you have some resources to guide supervision through telehealth by any chance?

A: Not yet! This is all very new.

For more information, please see:

<https://bhi-telehealthresource.uwmedicine.org/>

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Behavioral Health Providers across Washington State are on the front lines providing critical mental health and substance use treatment during an unprecedented public health emergency. State and federal guidelines continue to evolve so that more providers may use telehealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations from across the state have responded in amazing fashion to assure that providers across the continuum and age spectrum have access to information and resources necessary to help you begin or expand your use of telehealth.

<https://bhi-telehealthresource.uwmedicine.org/Pages/About-Us.aspx>
