

Providing Client-Centered Care in the Remote Environment

COVID-19 has required many agencies to provide services remotely, for example, over the phone or via video calls. Providing care in a client-centered manner, the same way you were providing it to clients when you met them face-to-face, is one way to offer clients stability in all of this change. The following steps and strategies apply to providing client-centered care over phone or video calls:

How has your agency been preparing for remote service delivery?

Use the following checklist to review the potential policies that your agency may have developed for providing remote services at your agency:

- Appropriate device to use with clients** – Are personal devices ok to use?
- Appropriate spaces to conduct calls** – Are you required to call clients from private spaces without disruptions?
- Confidentiality practices** – What confidentiality practices are in place, in addition to HIPAA, to protect patient confidentiality?
- Documentation** – Is there a way for you to document electronically in a client's chart? If not, how do you document?
- Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)** – If you are a supervisor, what policies are in place to conduct CQI and supervise remote services?

Has your agency developed guidelines for calls?

- Scheduling calls** - Do you have to find a date and time that works best for clients? And do you ask the client how they would like to connect, for example, over phone or video chat? Do the clients need to be asked whether they have a private, quiet space to take the call from?
- Appointment reminders** – How are appointment reminders being done for remote appointments?
- Conducting unscheduled calls** – Can you conduct unscheduled calls, calling clients without an appointment set up ahead of time?
- What to do if someone else or the answering machine picks up** – What do you do or say if someone other than the client or the answering machine picks up?
- Sending documents** – How do you send required documents to clients ahead of appointments?
- Preparing for calls** – Are you required to have notes about the client in front of you that you can refer to which shows clients you remember the details of their lives and that you care? Does your agency have other requirements for how to prepare for calls in any specific ways?
- Other considerations** – Are there guidelines around other considerations like putting a client on hold or using speakerphone?



What strategies can you use to make a call client-centered?

You can use specific client-centered strategies when working with clients. Review the strategies related to each of the 4 steps below in the diagram below.

