

“Piloting the use of an I-Pad by social workers and clients in Community Therapy Services; home based settings”

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Background

Social workers are an integral part of the interdisciplinary team in Community Therapy Services. Social workers undertake interventions with clients and their caregivers in the environment most appropriate to their care e.g., home/community or the center.

If home/community based interventions are indicated, the social worker will complete all psychosocial assessments, goal setting and all subsequent treatment in this environment. Currently, it isn't until when these social workers return to the office they have the opportunity to complete all paperwork (notation and reports), resourcing and referrals.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems are increasing in use across health care settings. This in turn, is increasing the clinician's ability to be more effective with their time and more client centered. By using an I-Pad with internet access would allow social workers who see clients and their caregivers in the setting of their own home or community, the ability to be more time efficient and client centered. Having access to the internet would enable social workers to immediately resource community supports e.g. groups and services and then forward the information to our internet savvy clients/caregivers. If the client/carer consents, all referrals can be completed immediately via connecting care (secure site). Receipt of referral is immediate using this system.

Method

This quality assurance project was approved by the members of the Human Research Ethics Committee. Data has been collected via qualitative methods (interviews with clients and/or carers) along with feedback from the Social Worker who trailed the technology. Participant Information and Consent forms have been used for both the clients/carers and the Social Worker trailing the I-Pad. 10 participants were interviewed and this data underwent a thematic analysis.

Results & Discussion

Qualitative themes drawn from the data; timely intervention, empowerment from information and patient centered care/involvement will be presented. Recommendations for the use ICT on an ongoing basis will be discussed.