
MFTs in Public Mental Health: The Challenge for Educators and Supervisors

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Preparing the Public Mental Health Workforce

- Education and training needs to address the potential discrepancies experienced by the MFT in public mental health in these areas:
 - Treatment Approach
 - Population Served
 - Treatment Methodology
 - Therapeutic Relationship
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Treatment Approach

- Recovery-oriented
 - Person-centered
 - Focus on quality of life
 - Promotes empowerment, competency, community integration, and recovery
 - Engages the whole person
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Population Served

- Persons living in poverty
 - Cultural issues
 - Community integration issues – benefits, fair housing, ADA
 - Persons diagnosed with serious mental illness
 - Cultural issues
 - Family dynamics
 - Best practices
 - Resources
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Treatment Methodology

- Practitioner works as part of a team which includes relevant family and community partners
 - The community is the office
 - Services are scheduled as needed
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Therapeutic Relationship

- Personal as well as professional
 - Boundaries are less well-defined
 - Decisions about boundaries are intentional
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Challenges for educators

- Determine what material can be incorporated in existing courses
 - Develop a “Fundamentals of Working in Public Mental Health” course
 - Provide training experiences – practicums and internships - in public mental health settings
 - Assure that discrepancies in work experience and traditional course work are addressed in supervision
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