

Developing Clinical Guidelines for Therapeutic Counselling in a Sexualized Environment: Using a Case Discussion Approach

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Therapy, Technology and Treatment: Interventions to Reduce Gay Men's Risk
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RESEARCH
CONFERENCE

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CHANGING THE COURSE OF THE
HIV PREVENTION, ENGAGEMENT AND
TREATMENT CASCADE

Presentation Outline

- Process and methodology used to develop clinical guidelines for a bathhouse counselling program, TowelTalk
 - Overview of the TowelTalk program
 - Project background and rationale
 - Research process
 - Overview of outcomes

TOWEL TALK

B a t h h o u s e C o u n s e l l i n g

- 2009, brief, anonymous walk-in counselling in Toronto's male bathhouses
- 3 bathhouse counsellors
- 10 - 45 minute sessions
- Follow-up counselling for up to 8 sessions at ACT
- AIDS Bureau funded

TowelTalk Evaluation

- Evaluation of 1st year pilot
- Challenges
- Recommendation to identify a counselling model for TowelTalk or manualize the intervention
- Clinical Working Group formed (2011)

Documenting TowelTalk

AIDS Committee of Toronto

- Constantine Cabarios, Jessica Cattaneo, Jack Mohr, Marco Posadas, Rahim Thawer, Jocelyn Watchorn

Mount Sinai Hospital

- Scott Bowler and Peter Deroche

David Kelly Services, Family Services Toronto

- Laurie Chesley,

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

- Christina Yager



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



Case Study Methodology

- Holistic exploration of an individual system
- Capture context specific knowledge and professional expertise

“A qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes.” (Creswell et al. 2007)

Research Process

- Series of Case Discussions
- Case Discussion Guides
 - Literature Review
 - Environmental Scan
 - Program Data (Counselling Session Notes, themes, demographic information)
- Case Discussion Summary Notes

Ethical Considerations

- Multiple roles and relationships (employee, manager, clinical consultant)
- Guiding Process
 - Counsellors able to review and change summary notes
 - Counsellors able to review and change aspects of final written guidelines
 - Consistent discussion and check-in regarding counsellor vulnerability throughout process

Analysis and Writing

- 6 working group members, 3 coding sessions
 - programmatic principals, clinical technique/practice, session elements, program structure, bathhouse context
- Guideline outline
- Shared writing process

Overview of Guidelines

1. Understanding the Bathhouse Environment
2. TowelTalk Programmatic Principals
 - Engagement, client-centred, harm and risk reduction, sex positivity, anti-oppressive practice
3. Clinical Elements
 - Acknowledging the sexualized environment, flexibility, use of self, boundary management (working in a community you are part of, self care)
4. Structure of a Session
 - Setting up, engagement, assessment, developing the material, ending a session
5. Follow-up Counselling
6. The Role of the Clinical Consultant
7. Recruitment Training, and Staff Supervision

Next Steps

- Service Provider Document:

Documenting TowelTalk: Guidelines for Providing Brief, Therapeutic Counselling in a Sexualized Environment

- Guidelines review by mental health professionals and service providers
- Revision and dissemination

Guidelines Development Process

- Deeply collaborative process
- Challenge assumptions
- Shared learning
- Acknowledge counsellors' expertise

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