Blog Post Outline: "The top 3 forms mental health professionals use for measurement based care"

Topic:	Mental Health forms	Notes:
Requested From/Assigned:	HW	
Request Type:	New blog	
Due:	Jan 28	
Status	<mark>Briefed</mark>	
Webpage	New	
Author:	Janet	
Editor:	**HW**	
Objective and Direction	Promote and showcase the done-for-you templated forms we're building in Practice Better to serve our growing mental health professional audience, and to convey our knowledge of an emerging topic in the mental health profession.	
Key Idea	Some context here: - When we did our mental health customer research, having a vast array of native templated assessment forms was a major need (our competitor, SimplePractice, does this very well) - Since social workers, therapists, counselors, and psychologists can't order labs to objectively assess or measure progress, they rely on validated questionnaires to assess their clients and patients both at their initial visit and during follow-ups; this is known in the mental health profession as Measurement-based care - MBC is growing in popularity and will soon be table-stakes for mental health practitioners - Many practitioners who report to or bill insurance must assess, document, and report on their client progress anyway As a result, we want to outline the major forms used in measurement based care for mental health that will be available in Practice Better for practitioners to use.	

Keyword Considerations		
Primary Seed Keywords:	● Measurement-based care: MSV 260 KD 45 ● Mental health assessment forms: MSV 110 KD 47 ● PHQ-9: MSV 22,200 KD 84 ● GAD-7: MSV 12,100 KD 74	
Short-tail keywords	● measurement-based care in mental health: MSV 50 KD 34 ● measurement-based care tools: MSV 40 KD 19 ● PHQ-9 and GAD-7: MSV 590 KD 43 ● PHQ-9 scoring interpretation: MSV 1,000 KD 55 ● how to cite the DSM-5: MSV 1,000 KD 37	
Secondary/Long tail Keywords	● the defining feature of generalized anxiety disorder is: MSV 210 KD 23 ● implementing measurement-based care in behavioral health: MSV 20 KD N/A	
Audience:	● Bernice the balanced ● Alex the Ambitious ● Darla the Data-Driven	
Purpose/Funnel Stage:	● MOFU / Navattic Demo (I will create one specific to the mental health forms)	
Current Word Count (if applicable)	●	
Est. Word Count:		
Writer to add: meta title:		40-60 characters
Writer to add: meta description:		155–160 characters
Avg. Competitor Blog Post Examples		Competitors are not ranked for these specific terms.
Image alt text: (describe image, denote blog title and hero image)		
Style Guide Link		
Content Notes/Intent:	Some notes on measurement-based care for reference: https://www.oha.com/Documents/Background%20Reading%20to%20Measurement-Based%20Care.pdf	
Content Example 1:		

Internal Links	**Anchor Text: mental health practice management software** **Link:** https://practicebetter.io/mental-health-practice-management-software/ **Anchor Text:** automate recurring forms **Link:** https://practicebetter.io/recurring-forms-and-tasks/ **Anchor Text:** **Link:**	These anchor texts should point to another relevant page on the website	
External Links	**Anchor Text:** **Link:** **Anchor Text:** **Link:**	These anchor texts should point to a relevant page outside of our website that discusses the topic at hand	
Links to this Page	**Link:** **Anchor Text:** **Link:** **Anchor Text:**	Other potential pages that can link to this content piece	
Readability Score:	https://goodcalculators.com/flesch-kincaid-calculator/	Please note grade reading level	

Heading Level	Content	Notes	Links
Intro			
H2	Introduction Definition of Measurement-Based Care (MBC) Importance of MBC in Mental Health Treatment Overview of the Top Five Forms for Measurement-Based Care		
H2	Brief Overview of Measurement-Based Care Purpose and Goals Benefits for Mental Health Professionals and Patients	Using forms in Practice Better	https://youtu.be/wO7yO9v-E-k

	Integration into Treatment Plans		
H2	Form #1: Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) Explanation of PHQ-9 How Mental Health Professionals Use PHQ-9 for Assessment Benefits and Limitations	We have a template for this in platform	
H2	Form #2: Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7) Overview of GAD-7 Application in Mental Health Assessment Pros and Cons of Using GAD-7	We have a template for this in platform	
H2	Form #3: PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5) Explanation of PTSD Checklist How Mental Health Professionals Incorporate PTSD Checklist Advantages and Considerations	We have a template for this in platform	
H2	Best Practices for Implementing Measurement-Based Care Forms Training and Education for Mental Health Professionals Regular Monitoring and Updating of Forms Collaborative Approach with Patients	Can plug AI Charting Assistant here as a way to aggregate and summarize the conversation	
H2	Putting measurement-based care into practice: in your charting software Integration of Digital Platforms and Apps Telehealth Applications C. Future Trends in MBC Technology	Can convert forms into client notes in PB https://youtu.be/0YWqxb3kPAU	
Conclusion	Conclusion Emphasizing the Role of MBC in Enhancing Mental Health Treatment Encouraging Ongoing Research and Development integrating it		

	into telehealth practices and into Practice Management Software/EHR/EMR		
CTA	You can use these form codes straight in your practice better account. Not a customer yet?		
References			

SEO Checklist			
Keywords in Content			
	Primary Keywords in Title	●	
	Keywords in Metas	●	
	Primary Keywords in H1	●	
	Keywords in H2s and H3s	●	
	Keywords in the first 150 Words	●	
	Keyword Density < 1.5%	●	
Links			
	2-5 Internal Links	●	
	1-4 External Links (Authoritative)	●	
	No Broken Links	●	
	Links Open in New Tab	●	
Usability			
	CTA	●	
	Table of Contents for Usability (If Content is Long)	●	
Media			
	At Least 1 Image	●	
	At Least 1 Video	●	
	Alt Text For Images	●	
	Infographic	●	

Top 3 **Mental Health Assessment Forms** for **Measurement-Based Care**

If you ever played the Mystery Box party game as a child, you'll remember how challenging it was to guess the objects in the box by relying on your sense of touch.

Assessing and monitoring your clients' mental health can feel a bit like a game of Mystery Box. Each individual client's experience is unique, and the nuances aren't always clearly visible. The process is further complicated by the subjective nature of mental health experiences, which makes them difficult to quantify.

Measurement-Based Care (MBC) offers structure and clarity to mental health assessment, monitoring, and treatment. It's an evidence-based approach that relies on standardized measurement tools – like **mental health assessment forms** - to guide practitioners in making more informed care decisions. The systematic assessment of a patient's perspective of their progress and outcomes also helps to engage them more deeply in their care.

In this article, we'll be taking a closer look at three common **mental health assessment forms** you can incorporate into your own **measurement-based care** plans. But first, let's dig into the goals and benefits associated with **measurement-based care tools**.

A Quick Overview of **Measurement-Based Care**

The goal of **measurement-based care in mental health** is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the care you're delivering.

According to the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA), there are three essential components to **measurement-based care**:

1. Routinely collecting patient-reported outcomes throughout the course of treatment.

2. Sharing timely feedback with the patient about their reported progress scores and trends over time.

3. Acting on these data in the context of the provider's clinical judgment and the patient's experiences to guide the course of care.

Using standardized **mental health assessment forms** is critical to checking off the first item in the APA's list. These forms offer a tool to establish a baseline assessment

that you can revisit at defined intervals in the care journey. You then use the data to observe trends, measure progress, and modify treatment interventions.

Advances in electronic health record (EHR) tech are making it increasingly easy to collect, analyze, and securely share mental health assessment insights. For example, Practice Better includes many options for you to collect information directly from your clients using forms.

Let's take a look at three common **mental health assessment forms** that you might want integrated into your practice management solution: **PHQ-9, GAD-7**, and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5).

Form #1: Patient Health Questionnaire (**PHQ-9**)

The Patient Health Questionnaire (**PHQ-9**) is a standardized tool widely used in diagnosing and determining the severity of a client's depression. It consists of nine questions that a patient self-rates on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 3 (nearly every day).

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE-9 (PHQ-9)

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems? (Use "✔" to indicate your answer)	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

FOR OFFICE CODING ___0___ + _____ + _____ + _____
=Total Score: _____

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Extremely difficult
☐	☐	☐	☐

Developed by Drs. Robert L. Spitzer, Janet B.W. Williams, Kurt Kroenke and colleagues, with an educational grant from Pfizer Inc. No permission required to reproduce, translate, display or distribute.

Image alt = A sample of the Patient Health Questionnaire 9, or PHQ-9, **mental health assessment forms**.

The prescribed **PHQ-9 scoring interpretation** of a client's overall score is as follows:

- 1-4 = minimal depression
- 5-9 = mild depression
- 10-14 = moderate depression
- 15-19 = moderately severe depression
- 20-27 = severe depression

Having a patient complete the **PHQ-9** questionnaire as part of your intake process, and then at regular intervals during treatment, is an effective way to monitor their depression and the impact of your clinical interventions.

There are many benefits to using the **PHQ-9** as an assessment tool:

- It's quick to administer, with only nine questions to answer, plus a check for how much the problems are interfering with everyday functioning.
- It provides a structured and standardized view of depression across intervals and individuals.
- Sharing the ongoing results of your assessments with patients can help with self-awareness around their mental health and positive perceptions of care.
- The **PHQ-9** has been extensively validated across [many](#) [studies](#) to be a reliable measure of depression severity.

There are also some limitations to be aware of when using the **PHQ-9**:

- The questionnaire relies heavily on a patient's self-analysis, which can be subject to factors like [availability bias](#) or [recall bias](#).
- While the **PHQ-9** is effective for screening, it's not a diagnostic tool. It only serves to add information to your bigger-picture clinical assessment.

Form #2: Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (**GAD-7**)

The defining feature of generalized anxiety disorder is excessive, persistent worry and fear around various events or activities. The worry is typically difficult for a client to control and encompasses a wide range of everyday issues in their life.

The **PHQ-9 and GAD-7** screening tools were both developed by a research team made up of [Spitzer, Williams, Kroenke](#), and colleagues. **GAD-7** is a short, self-report questionnaire designed to identify probable cases of generalized anxiety disorder and assess the severity of symptoms.

GAD-7 consists of – you guessed it – seven questions related to anxious thoughts and behaviors patients might be experiencing. It asks the patient to rate how often each situation has affected them over a two-week period. Each item is scored on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 3 (nearly every day).

GAD-7

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

Total Score ___ = Add Columns ___ + ___ + ___

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Extremely difficult
☐	☐	☐	☐

Image alt = A sample of the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7, or GAD-7, **mental health assessment forms.**

The **GAD-7** scoring interpretation of a client's overall score is as follows:

- 0 - 4 = minimal anxiety
- 5-9 = mild anxiety
- 10 - 14 = moderate anxiety
- 15 - 21 = severe anxiety

The **PHQ-9 and GAD-7 mental health assessment forms** share similar benefits and limitations.

GAD-7 is quick to complete, extensively validated, and supports better patient-clinician collaboration. But it also relies on self-reporting, lacks insight into the context of anxiety symptoms, and has limited diagnostic power.

Form #3: PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 (PCL-5)

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be tricky to diagnose as it is sometimes obscured by other mental health issues, like anxiety, panic attacks or difficulty concentrating. **Measurement-based care tools** are imperative to uncover PTSD and make a correct diagnosis so treatment can be targeted to the disorder.

The PCL-5 is a 20-item self-report tool that assesses the symptoms of PTSD. If responses suggest a likelihood of PTSD, it prompts further evaluation – most often a structured clinical interview, such as the CAPS-5, or Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale.

PTSD was classified as an anxiety disorder in DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition). It has since moved to a new category of "Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders" in DSM-5.

- The wording of the PCL-5 reflects changes to existing symptoms and addition of new symptoms in the DSM-5.
- The PTSD Checklist increased from 17 items to 20 questions with the migration to PCL-5.
- The PCL-5 serves several purposes, including screening for PTSD, making a preliminary diagnosis, and monitoring symptom change through treatment.

Clients completing the PCL-5 answer 20 questions related to how much they were affected by specific symptoms in the past month.

The rating scale ranges from 0 (Not at all) to 4 (extremely). Initial research suggests that a PCL-5 cutoff score between 31-33 is indicative of probable PTSD across samples.

PCL-5

Instructions: Below is a list of problems that people sometimes have in response to a very stressful experience. Keeping your worst event in mind, please read each problem carefully and then select one of the numbers to the right to indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.

Your worst event: _____

In the past month, how much were you bothered by:	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world (for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
10. Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
11. Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
12. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
13. Feeling distant or cut off from other people?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
14. Trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
15. Irritable behavior, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
16. Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
17. Being "superalert" or watchful or on guard?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
18. Feeling jumpy or easily startled?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
19. Having difficulty concentrating?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○
20. Trouble falling or staying asleep?	0 ○	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○

Image alt = A sample of the PCL-5 **mental health assessment forms**

The PCL-5 shares similar benefits to the **PHQ-9 and GAD-7** when it comes to PTSD screening and assessment. It also offers the additional benefit of having a trauma-specific focus and nuanced assessment of the most up-to-date symptoms association with PTSD in the broader categories of re-experiencing, avoidance, and hyperarousal.

As with any assessment tool, it should be used within the broader context of a thorough clinical evaluation, considering individual differences and potential limitations.

Best Practices for Implementing **Measurement-Based Care** Forms

Integrating standardized **mental health assessment forms** into your treatment programs is an excellent way to monitor and track the progress of your clients. Here are some tips for ensuring they fit seamlessly into your practice:

- **Ensure training is up to date**. You need proper administration of assessment tools, interpretation of results, and a thorough understanding of the clinical implications of those results. For those in need of training or support, many professional associations provide resources and guidance around delivering **measurement-based care**.

  You can also find resources online. For example, Stanford Medicine offers guidance on interpreting test results.

- **Keep your clients in the loop.** Make sure you clearly communicate the purpose of **mental health assessment forms**, how you will use the results, and how their treatment planning benefits from measuring their baseline mental health and monitoring progress.

- **Be mindful of relevance. patient differences.** Review your assessment tools to make sure they are well-matched to the population you're treating and aligned with current best practices.

  For example, if you work with clients under the age of 18, then you might want to consider an assessment tool specifically for that younger population, like the Children's Depression Inventory (CDI).

  Many assessment tools are also available in multiple languages, which can help with maintaining the accuracy and relevance of your data if you work with clients who are more comfortable answering questions in a language other than English.

Incorporating **Measurement-Based Care** into Your Practice

Finding ways to embed **measurement-based care tools** seamlessly into the routine workflows of your practice can save precious time and resources.

- Having assessment forms available in your mental health practice management software will help to streamline administration and data tracking. You can easily incorporate forms into your intake process or automate recurring forms to ensure ongoing assessment is completed at regular intervals.

The added ability to convert completed assessment forms into notes that you can update immediately or add to during a session is also a huge timesaver.
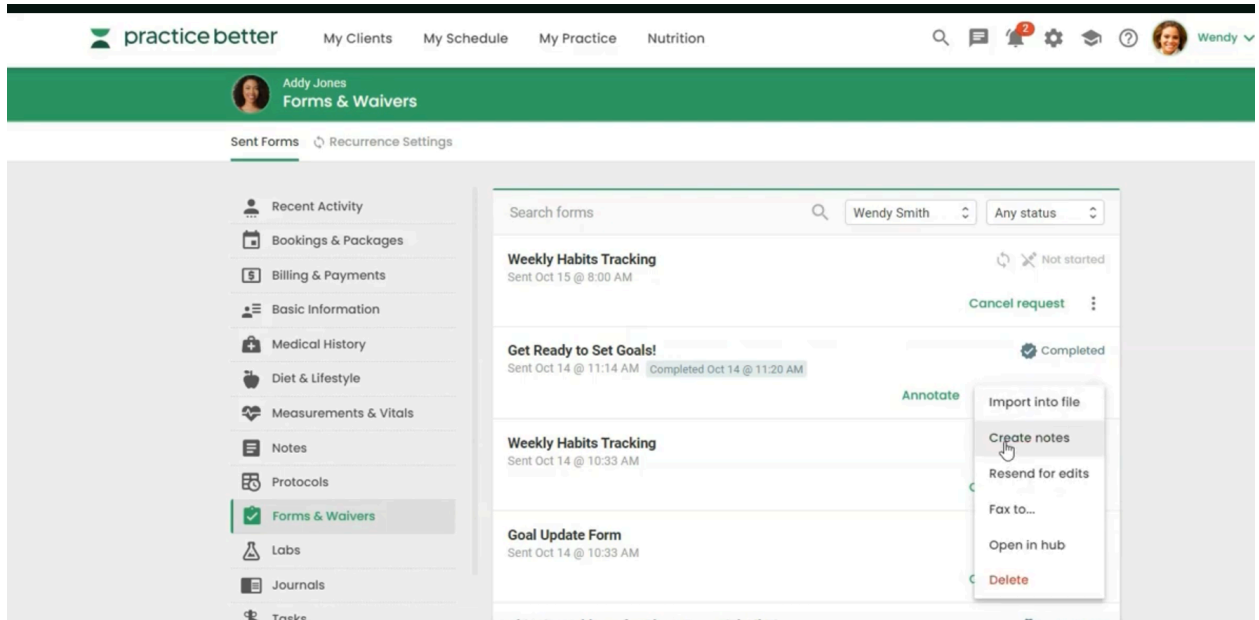

Image alt = Screen shot of the Practice Better interface showing a list of completed forms and a drop down with Create Notes selected.

- Charting is an essential aspect of implementing **measurement-based care**. Having access to reusable templates and easy sharing makes organizing, documenting, and communicating smoother.

- It's also handy having a single repository where you can monitor a client's progress and easily pull information related to assessment results, treatment plans, and more – both for your own use and for insurance companies looking to validate the necessity of treatments.

- If you counsel clients via telehealth, using a built-in AI note-taking tool can also be a big time-saver. It frees you to channel 100% of your focus to what the patient on the other side of the screen is saying, rather than scrambling to take accurate notes while actively listening.

Of course, any technology you choose must be HIPAA compliant to safeguard patient privacy. They should also provide secure communication channels for sharing results or conducting telehealth sessions.

The Future of Mental Health Practices Features
Measurement-Based Care

When it comes to optimizing mental health, each client's journey is unique. Trying to assess symptoms and understand outcomes can quickly land you back in Mystery Box territory.

It's not surprising that **measurement-based care in mental health** is rapidly growing in popularity. It gives practitioners a proven, data-driven approach to enhance clinical expertise, measure success, and detect shifts earlier, so they can make timely adjustments and provide more individualized care.

Standardized screening questionnaires – like **PHQ-9 and GAD-7** – are important **measurement-based care tools** when it comes to objective assessment of your clients' mental health. Having these forms natively available in your practice management software can go a long way towards streamlining care and providing a holistic, accurate view of every client.

The **PHQ-9, GAD-7**, and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 forms are already pre-populated in the Practice Better platform – you can easily access them right from your account. If you're not a Practice Better customer yet, you can still check them out. Try the platform free for 14 days.

SOCIAL COPY - Script

Hey there, mental health professionals!

Are you hearing the term measurement-Based Care tossed around a lot these days?

It's not surprising that it's top of mind.

Just like primary care providers do routine bloodwork and screening tests, mental health professionals are using tools to objectively assess their clients. Measurement-based care offers structure and clarity to mental health assessment, monitoring, and treatment.

And standardized screening questionnaires can be your objective assessment BFFs.

Having forms like PHQ-9 and GAD-7 within your practice management software will save you a bunch of time.

Bonus: You'll also get an accurate long-term view of each client's progress.

Want to know how to best use these forms in your EHR? Hit the link in our bio.

Facebook:
Ever wondered about Measurement-Based Care? It's gaining traction for a reason! Find out how it brings clarity and structure to mental health assessment, monitoring, and treatment.

✅Explore how tools like PHQ-9, GAD-7, and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 are reshaping mental health treatment. Plus, save time and gain an accurate long-term view of your clients' progress!

🔗 Check out the blog for tips on optimizing assessment form templates in your #EHR.

Instagram:
🧠 Curious about Measurement-Based Care? 🧠

It's a game-changer for mental health professionals. Explore how tools like PHQ-9, GAD-7, and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 are reshaping mental health treatment. Streamline your process and track your clients' progress accurately.

🔗Tap the link in our bio for expert tips on using assessment form templates in your #EHR.

LinkedIn:
📢Have you heard of Measurement-Based Care? It's making waves for good reason!

Explore its role in bringing structure and clarity to mental health assessment, monitoring, and treatment. Learn how questionnaires such as PHQ-9 and GAD-7 can enhance your assessments. Plus, use embedded forms in your EHR for efficient time management and accurate long-term progress tracking.

Check out our blog for insights on using assessment form templates effectively in your EHR.