SPILL THE TEA CAFE

Community Visits Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to establish clear and consistent procedures at Spill the Tea Cafe (STTC) for completing community visits. This ensures the safety of care coordinators (CCs), protects client rights, and provides a professional framework for delivering high-quality, ethically sound services in the client's home or community setting.

Definition

A community visit is a pre-scheduled appointment in-person meeting between a care coordinator at a client in the client's home or agreed-upon community location. All community visits *must be approved in advance* by STTC Clinical Supervisor at supervision.

Community Visit Safety

The safety of care coordination staff is the top priority. All care coordination staff should adhere to the following guidelines for home visits.

1. Pre-Visit Assessment

Risk Assessment: A risk assessment must be completed before any home visit, particularly for initial visits. The assessment should consider:

1. **Client history**: Previous violence, substance abuse, or threatening behavior.
2. **Location:** Neighborhood safety, accessibility, and lighting.
3. **Nature of visit**: Is the purpose of the visit high-risk (e.g., post-hospitalization, past or current domestic violence, substance misuse, etc.)?
4. **Home environment**: Known presence of weapons, aggressive animals, or unsafe conditions.

Dual-Worker Visits: In cases where a risk assessment identifies a need for additional safety, a joint visit with a colleague or supervisor, may be appropriate. If necessary, a visit can be transitioned to the community or at STTC to promote safety.

Supervisor Approval: STTC Clinical Supervisor **must approve** all community visits. Inform the supervisor of the date, time, and location of the home visit and any known risks.

"Spill The Tea Cafe ("STTC") is recognized as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to the organization are tax-deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. STTC is registered as a charitable organization with the State of Hawaii Department of the Attorney General. STTC's EIN Number: 86-3755416"

Plan Logistics: Plan your route to and from the home visit, including directions to client home and safe parking location.

Attire and Belongings: Dress professionally, but comfortably, wearing appropriate non-respective footwear. Avoid wearing flashy jewelry or accessories. Secure valuables out of sight in the vehicle's trunk before arrival.

2. During the Visit

Arrive and Park Safely: Park in a well-lit area, preferably with your vehicle facing the exit for a quick departure. Observe surroundings for potential dangers before approaching the door or entrance.

Inform Supervisor: Contact supervisor or designated contact person to confirm arrival at home visit. Include client initials, current address, and expected duration of visit (e.g. BT, Boba St. Apt. 903 Honolulu, HI 96822, 1 hr visit).

Identify yourself: Upon knocking, stand to the side of the door. Clearly state your name and agency when the door is opened and present your agency identification.

Assess the Environment: Politely ask if there are other persons in the home besides client and parent or legal guardian, request that pets be secured in a separate room if necessary and be aware of your surroundings and objects that could pose a threat.

Establish a Safe Position: Position yourself so you have a clear unobstructed exit from the room. Do not allow anyone to block access to an exit.

Maintain Professional Boundaries: Do not accept gifts, food, or drinks from clients unless refusing would be culturally insensitive or cause offense. If confidentiality is threatened by the presence of other individuals, politely explain the need for a private conversation.

Leave if unsafe: Trust your instincts. If you feel threatened, notice unlawful activity, or the situation becomes volatile, immediately terminate the visit. Leave the premises calmly but quickly.

3. Post-Visit

Inform Supervisor: Contact supervisor or designated contact person to confirm safe completion of the visit.

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Document the Visit: Complete documentation in Simple Practice EHR within 72 hours of occurring visit.

Report incidents: If an incident occurs at a home visit, including a threat to the safety of the client or staff member, seek consultation from a supervisor immediately.

Clients Rights

Right to refuse a home visit: A client has the right to refuse a home visit and request to be seen at STTC office or an alternative, safe location.

Right to dignity and privacy: A client's home is their private space. CCs must respect the client's privacy and cultural norms while in the home.

Right to confidentiality: All information shared during a home visit is confidential, subject to the legal and ethical exceptions of mandated reporting (e.g., child abuse, elder abuse, danger to self or others).

Right to information: Client has the right to informed consent regarding care coordination services and the reason and purpose for the home visit. CCs **do not meet** with minor clients in the community or home setting without parent consent and supervision.

Reimbursement Submission

Food or Beverages: CCs are pre-approved to purchase the client a beverage or food item under $5.00. Any food or beverage items costing more than $5.00 must be approved directly by STTC. CCs are required provide copy of their receipts and submit for reimbursement on a monthly basis through the STTC Reimbursement Form

Mileage: CCs utilizing their personal vehicles to complete community visits are required to keep a detailed log of all mileage incurred. CCs will be appropriately compensated for round-trip mileage to and from community visits per the Federal Reimbursement Rate. You will not be reimbursed for your normal, daily commute to and from your home to the STTC office. CCs are required to submit their mileage for reimbursement on a monthly basis through the STTC Reimbursement Form.

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