

BEST PRACTICE CATALOG

Project Title: PROGRAM EVALUATION USING THE SYMPTOM SEVERITY RATING SCALE IN THE VACAVILLE PSYCHIATRIC PROGRAM

Function Category: PATIENT-FOCUSED ORGANIZATION STRUCTURES

Subcategory: Assessment of Patients Heading: Practice Guidelines/Protocols/Parameters

Key Word(s): Treatment Outcome

Contact Person: Jerald Justice/Myla Young Telephone Number: (707) 449-6594

Hospital: Vacaville Psychiatric Program

Purpose: Since its inception, the Vacaville Psychiatric Program (VPP) has undergone systematic change to define and continually refine the treatment program in order to meet the mental health needs of the incarcerated PC 2684 patient population. Treatment planning and service delivery has been guided by an empirical and experimental understanding of the patient population. Concurrent with the implementation of redesigned treatment programs, a system for the objective evaluation of patient treatment outcome was designed. The Symptom Severity Rating Scale (SSRS) was developed using empirical descriptive data obtained from research conducted over a 3-year period using random samples from the VPP patient population.

Brief Description: The SSRS is comprised of 16 symptom variables (18 for the Day Treatment Program), which are measured periodically over the course of treatment. The specific symptom variables selected for measurement are highly representative of the VPP patient population, and are also target symptoms for therapeutic change. In keeping with a biopsychosocial rehabilitative perspective, ratings are done not by individual clinicians but by consensus of the interdisciplinary team, for all patients admitted to the Program. The instrument yields data which is relevant for single case evaluation (and therefore useful for treatment planning on the unit), as well as aggregate data which provides an overall measure of treatment efficacy for the Programs (Acute and Day Treatment).

Selection Basis/Criteria: The SSRS continues to serve the Programs well as an objective measure in program evaluation and program refinement. In addition to serving this intended purpose, the data generated by the SSRS has been useful in the evaluation of subgroups, which may not be representative of the overall VPP. These include: Patients who recidivate; Patients admitted from Pelican Bay State Prison; Patients who require high levels of restraint; Psychopathic patients; Patients who are discharged as "emergency discharges" from Day Treatment; and Patients who demonstrate high levels of lifetime violence. The databases maintained for both Programs are a valuable resource for future investigations aimed toward better defining, understanding, and treating the VPP patient population.

The following items are available regarding this Best Practice:

Photographs Video Tape Drawings Manual

Other : _____

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