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Psychiatric Medication Management & Collaboration



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My background...

- I am a licensed clinical social worker in Indiana & Ohio.
- Registered Behavioral Consultant with IN-ABC
- Worked with people with ID since 1991.
- I have over 30 years of experience of helping others. I have extensive experience working with people with disabilities, their families, and their caregivers.
- I am the owner and mental health therapist of Encompass Behavioral Group.
- I work with Opportunities for Positive Growth as a Registered Behavioral Consultant & Clinical Team Lead.
- I have worked at community mental health center as a Community Based Therapist working with people with Serious Mental Illness as well as other social service agencies throughout the years including residential care, case management, crisis hotlines, long term care facilities, diagnostic evaluations and crisis support.



Overview

- Roles & Responsibilities
- Best Practices & Expectations
- What do I know? How can the role of the BC can help be continuity thread for those they support.
- Pivot | How to navigate the psychiatrist shortage
- Resources | Effective reference websites, apps, & medication verification
- Challenges & Success Stories

Roles & Responsibilities | who attends psychiatric medication appointments & why.

- The Person.
- Trusted Person who can provide information and context about the individual's behavior and needs, while ensuring their voice is heard during the assessment.
- Have a deep understanding of the person's daily life
- Understand their communication style
- Aware of the challenges they may face to provide insight to the prescriber
- Family member
- Friend
- Support Staff/Caregiver
- Advocate
- Behavioral Consultant

What do I know? How can the role of the BC can help be continuity thread for those they support.

“Behavioral supports are an array of services designed to support individuals who are experiencing or are likely to experience challenges accessing, and actively participating in the community as a result of behavioral, social, or emotional challenges.

Behavioral support services are intended to empower individuals and families (by leveraging their strengths and unique abilities) to achieve self-determination, interdependence, productivity, integration and inclusion in all facets of community life, across all environments, across the lifespan.”

(Source: IN.Gov, Behavior Support Services Guidance)

The BC's Role: You know A LOT!

- Observations
- Feedback: Med efficacy/Side Effects/Drug History
- Environmental assessments
- Record reviews
- Interviews
- Often the “Clinical Historian” for the person
- Data collection
- Psychosocial/biomedical history
- Identifies targeted behaviors, their functions, and hypothesizes the underlying needs for new learning.



The BC's Role: Continued...

- Developing a comprehensive behavioral support plan
- Devises proactive & reactive strategies to support the person
- Evaluate and assess that the least intrusive/restrictive methods has been tried, documented, & exhausted before using highly restrictive procedures.
- Supporting the person in learning new, positive behaviors
- For example: coping strategies, improving relationships, or other strategies to reduce targeted behaviors & improve quality of life
- Consulting with team members to achieve assessment & behavioral support plan outcomes.

Best Practices & Expectations

Best Practices & Expectations

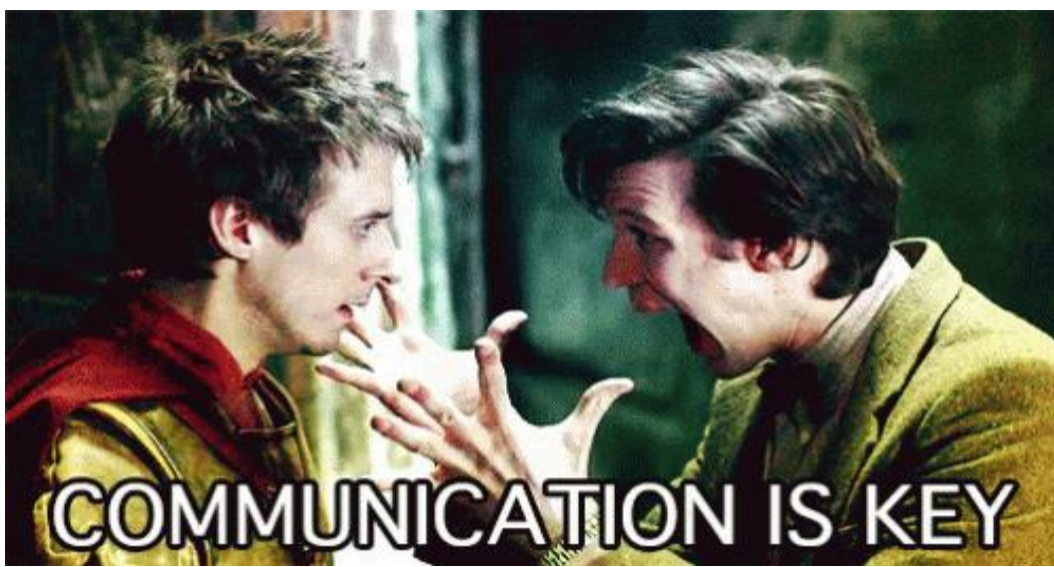
Collaborating with a psychiatric prescriber as part of a team while advocating for the person supported requires

- **clear communication**
- **mutual respect**
- **focus on the person's overall well-being**

**Communication:
Our aim is to...**



To Affirm



But, what communication can feel like is another.

Communication | Open & Clear

- **Active listening**: Listen to the prescriber's insights and recommendations carefully, as they bring valuable expertise in diagnosing & managing mental health conditions.
- **Speak clearly and concisely**: Present your observations (from you or other team members) & concerns clearly, using clinical language & objective data where possible or appropriate.
- **Ask questions**: Seek clarification on any medical or pharmacological aspects that may impact the person's care, especially if those areas intersect with **psychosocial factors**.
- **Collaborative tone**: Frame conversations as team-based problem-solving rather than as directives or disagreements.

Focus on the Entire Person

- **Share Comprehensive Information About the Person:** Provide the prescriber with a detailed view of the person's psychosocial circumstances, including family dynamics, social supports, environmental stressors, and the person's coping strategies, which may not be immediately evident in brief psychiatric encounters.
- **Behavioral observations:** Share your observations about the person's functioning, mood, behavior, and response to interventions.
- **Cultural and contextual factors:** Highlight any cultural, spiritual, or contextual factors that may influence the person's experience of their symptoms or their treatment adherence.

The Psychiatrist's Role and Expertise

- **Acknowledge their expertise:** Understand that psychiatric prescriber has specialized knowledge in diagnosis, medication management, and psychopharmacology. Respect their recommendations, even when offering differing perspectives on the person's needs.
- **Be open to feedback:** Collaboration may involve learning from each other's roles, so be open to feedback from the prescriber, especially if it involves treatment planning or adjusting therapeutic approaches.

Advocate for the Person's Voice & Preferences

- Person Centered-Person First: While collaborating, ensure that the person's voice, goals, & preferences are leading the conversation.
- Do not exclude them but engage them in the discussion in however they can participate at their best ability.
- This could mean advocating for non-medication options, suggesting slower adjustments to treatment, or addressing concerns about side effects.
- Support empowerment: Support the person to articulate their concerns or questions about their treatment to the psychiatrist, ensuring they feel heard and understood.

A close-up, slightly blurred image of Yoda's face. He has a thoughtful or questioning expression, with his mouth slightly open. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue. The text is overlaid in the lower half of the image.

**HMM, SEEK CLARITY YOU
DO?**

Coordinate & Clarify Roles

- **Define roles early on:** Ensure clarity about each team member's role in the person's care. This reduces overlap or misunderstandings especially when there are multiple roles and team members supporting the person.
- **Clarify Decision-Making:** It is imperative that there is support-during and after the appointment.
- **Communicate, discuss, develop and facilitate** healthy relationships on the team.
- If the person has a **guardian**, advocate, etc. that is required or is somehow responsible for the medication and/or care planning that would be discussed at an appointment, be sure to encourage their participation.

Coordinate & Clarify Roles

- **Work** with the individual, prescriber & team members **to understand** their roles, the relationship & clearly understand the dynamics.
- **Coordinate care planning:** Work with the psychiatrist to align goals and avoid conflicting advice. If the psychiatrist recommends medication, you can provide complementary interventions, such as psychosocial support, that reinforce the treatment plan.
- **Clarify expectations:** Ensure that the person and team members understand the psychiatrist's role in prescribing and monitoring medication, while your role as a behavioral consultant may focus on therapy, supporting the person in learning new, positive behaviors.

Provide Input on Non-Medication Interventions

- **Suggest psychosocial interventions:** Offer recommendations on therapeutic interventions such as counseling, support groups, mindfulness, or behavioral activation that could supplement the psychiatrist's pharmacological approach.
- **Discuss social determinants of health:** Advocate for addressing social determinants of health (e.g., housing, financial instability, access to resources) that may be affecting the person's mental health and well-being.
- **Work on a shared plan:** Create or contribute to a comprehensive care plan that incorporates both the psychiatrist's treatment recommendations and the psychosocial support that you can provide.

Monitor and Evaluate Treatment Progress Together


- **Feedback:** Keep the psychiatrist updated on the person's progress or any challenges the person is encountering. This includes feedback from medication, behavioral, and psychosocial interventions and strategies.
- **Collaborative problem-solving:** If the person is not responding well to medication, work with the psychiatrist to adjust treatment strategies, incorporating psychosocial factors that may be influencing the person's condition.
- **Document shared plans:** Clearly document the treatment plan and updates in the person's file, ensuring that both the psychiatrist and you have access to up-to-date information.

Support a Trauma-Informed Approach

- **Highlight trauma history:** If the person has a trauma history, ensure that this is communicated to the psychiatrist (with sensitivity), as it may influence their response to treatment or medication. Advocate for a trauma-informed approach in both medical and therapeutic settings.
- **Safety and consent:** Ensure that the person feels safe, respected, and informed about their treatment options, advocating for the person's right to participate fully in decision-making.

Maintain Ongoing Collaboration

- **Regular check-ins:** Set up regular meetings or communications with the psychiatrist to discuss the person's progress and any new developments in their mental health or social situation.
- **Collaborative mindset:** View the psychiatrist as a partner in the person's care, sharing insights and updates that benefit the whole team's understanding of the person's needs.

A man with dark hair and a mustache is peeking from behind a light-colored wall. He is looking towards the camera with a slightly mischievous expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The text "Pivot...Pivot! PIVAAT!" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font at the bottom of the image.

Pivot...Pivot! PIVAAT!

Pivot | How to navigate the psychiatrist shortage

- **Telepsychiatry:** Leverage this resource, expand its use, and encourage this platform. Use it for those that can use it successfully.
- Utilize and maximize **Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners (NPs) and Physician Assistants (PAs)**.
- **Maximize your Primary Care Prescriber** whenever appropriate. Especially those trained or connected with a Collaborative Care Model.
 - Collaborative Care Model options: This model integrates mental health services into primary care settings, where primary care physicians (PCPs) work with psychiatric consultants and behavioral health specialists.
- Utilize your **Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs)**.
- **Utilize trained licensed mental health professionals** for added support, clinical resources in the community as well as in schools and workplaces. They can address mental health concerns before they become severe enough to require psychiatric intervention. This reduces the need for specialized psychiatric care.

Growing Need for Mental Health Services

- 1 in 5 Adults in America experience some form of mental illness
- 60% of adults with a mental illness received no mental health services in the previous year
- 50% of youth (ages 8-15) with a mental illness received no health services in the previous year
- National average wait time for appointments with a mental health professional is 7.5 weeks
- 1,129,000 adults in Indiana have a mental health condition. (4 x the population of Fort Wayne)
- More than half of Americans report that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their mental health. (Source: NAMI)

Resources

Resources to Connect with Psych Prescribers

- Use the **Indiana Medicaid Provider Search Tool**
- **Contact Managed Care Plans** (if applicable):
 - Anthem, MDWise, CareSource & MHS
- **SAMHSA Treatment Locator:**
 - The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a treatment locator to find mental health services, including those that accept Medicaid.
- **Local Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs):** usually offer sliding scale payments, comprehensive mental health services, & often work with low-income individuals.
- **Local Hospitals & Health Systems:** Some hospitals & university health systems offer psychiatric services & accept Medicaid.
 - Ex. Indiana University Health & Eskenazi Health
- **Ask Your Primary Care Physician**
- **Contact Indiana Medicaid Customer Service: 1-800-457-4584.**
- www.psychologytoday.com

Apps & Helpful Tools

- **Ask what is the most effective way to communicate** with the office staff, nurse, or the prescriber directly. Do they have a client portal, app, etc? What is safe, secure and effective?
- **Mental Health Management Apps**, consider these features:
 - Appointment Scheduling & Reminders: Automatic reminders for appointments with your psychiatrist or therapist.
 - Medication Tracking: Reminders to take medications as prescribed.
 - Symptom/Mood Tracking: Tools to track changes mood, symptoms, or any side effects you experience from medications.
 - Reports for Providers: The ability to generate reports to share with your mental health provider during visits.

Medication Verification Apps

- These are useful tools to help ensure you're taking the right medications and have the correct information about them.
 - identify medications by scanning pill bottles
 - inputting medication names
 - checking interactions
 - even verifying prescription details

Medication Verification App Examples

- MediSafe
- Drugs.com Medication Guide
- Pill Identifier & Drug Search (by Drugs.com)
- Medscape
- MyTherapy
- WebMD Medication Reminder
- RxSaver
- GoodRx
- CareZone
- Medisafe Pill Reminder (Offers a family or caregiver support feature, allowing others to track adherence)

To Conclude...

- It is more important than ever to build a stronger mental health system that provides the care, support and services needed to help people build better lives.
- Utilizing best practices, you can effectively collaborate with the psychiatrist while advocating for the person's needs, ensuring that their psychosocial, emotional, and medical needs are met in a coordinated, respectful manner.



Discussion | Challenges | Success Stories

References Upon Request



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