



HEMHA

HIGHER EDUCATION MENTAL HEALTH ALLIANCE

Distance Counseling and Animals on Campus: Ethical and Philosophical Decisions 2019 ACCA Annual Conference; San Diego, CA A HEMHA Guide

HEMHA Representatives

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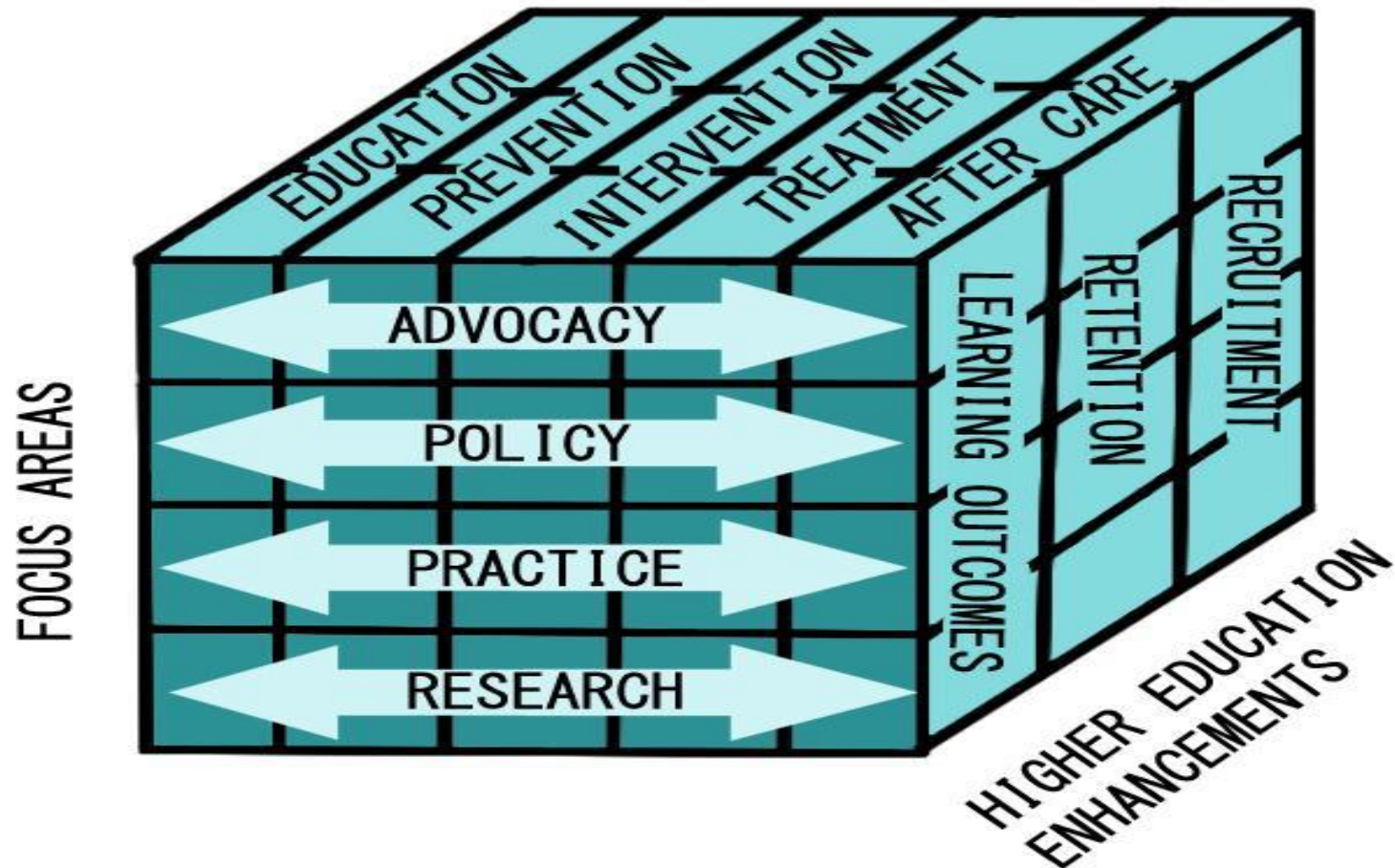
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Learning Objectives:

- Gain awareness of what the Higher Education Mental Health Alliance is and how to access the free resources it provides;
- Be able to define distance counseling, its many variations, and the circumstances under which it might be implemented with college students;
- Be able to identify logistical and ethical dilemmas in providing distance counseling in higher education settings;
- Provide feedback for the upcoming guide on Emotional Support Animals .



MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM





HEMHA Resources

Postvention: A Guide for Response to Suicide
on College Campuses

http://hemha.org/postvention_guide.pdf

Balancing Safety and Support on Campus: A
Guide for Campus Teams

http://hemha.org/campus_teams_guide.pdf

HEMHA web address: hemha.org



The purpose of this guide:

1. Outline the potential benefits, limitations, and concerns regarding telemental health services (TMH)
2. Aid college mental health professionals and administrators in engaging in dialogue about these benefits, limitations, and concerns to make informed decisions about whether/when to engage in providing TMH services.
3. Outline areas to consider in order to ethically practice at a distance when the decision to provide TMH services is made.
4. Provide links to resources.



What is Distance Counseling?





Tele-Health

- E-Therapy
- Web-based
- Distance Counseling
- Telepsychology
- Telepsychiatry



Benefits and Limitations of TMH

Engaging in TMH services requires acknowledgment of its potential benefits and limitations. Mental health professionals and their institutions must:

1. Carefully weigh the benefits and limitations,
2. Discern whether the benefits outweigh the limitations,
3. Put policies and procedures in place to maximize benefits and minimize limitations.



Benefits of TMH

- Increased access
- Convenience
- Cost savings (e.g. cuts out travel time for client)
- Barrier removal
- Reduced stigma
- Authenticity of emotional expression
- Effectiveness
- Client empowerment
- Social justice
- Increased clinical capacity



Limitations of TMH

- Confidentiality
- Interception of sensitive data
- Keeping pace with ethical codes and best practices
- Limited literature on effectiveness of TMH
- Inability to see communication in context
- Service disruption due to technical issues
- Credentialing
- Assessment administration
- Malpractice insurance
- Lack of technical infrastructure
- Crisis intervention
- HIPAA compliance



Best Practices

- Informed Consent
- Staging the Office Environment
- Keeping Pace with Technological Advances



Defining Eligibility for Distance Counseling Services

What are the:

- IHE accreditation requirements,
- Students' need for access, and
- Is it feasible to offer distance counseling services to students who telecommute to campus (e.g. technology infrastructure and security).



Which Students Would be Eligible for TMH Services?

- Students on campus taking online courses
- Students temporarily away from campus, e.g. Study abroad, internships, alternative spring breaks, etc.
- Degree seeking students taking courses from a distance
- Non-degree seeking students taking a single online class to transfer back to a home institution – are they considered our students?
- Online International students
- Students at an institution with smaller branches/programs implemented distant from a main campus that has mental health resources.



Case Scenario

Student presents to your office for a crisis appt. You determine no immediate risk, but encourage student to set up ongoing appts. They by responding that they "skype" with a counselor back home every week. They express the desire to also have a local counselor to help if needed. They request access to use a private room to meet with their counselor for skype sessions.

Questions to consider:

- What is the center's position/policy on TMH services?
- What is the state's requirements?
- When this question comes up with students, how do you approach it?
- Does you center provide space for students to use?
- What is your liability and procedure if a crisis takes place?
- What does your legal counsel's opinion?
- What is your process if you have concerns re: unethical or illegal practice?



Logistical Dilemmas

- HIPAA compliant technology
 - Communication technology
 - Data Collection technology
- Technical support for clients and staff
- Data security



Ethical & Legal Issues

- Privacy & confidentiality
- HIPAA considerations
- Training/competence considerations
 - Professional competence
 - Technology competence



Ethical & Legal Issues

- Practice across state and international boundaries
- Check licensure laws in both your location and the student's location before providing services.
- Verify malpractice insurance covers provision of TMH services



Next HEMHA Project: Animals on Campus: Emotional Support & Service Animals

- The **purpose** of this guide is to:
- Provide educational information, including background information, definitions of terms and types of animals on campuses, and review the current literature on this topic.
- Help engage mental health professionals and campus administrators in discussions about medical, legal, and ethical aspects of this topic in order to develop appropriate policies and procedures on their campuses.
- Outline several areas to consider re: animals on campuses, and illustrate with case examples.
- Connect readers to resources on the topic of animals on campuses, especially ESA's.



Animals on Campus: Emotional Support & Service Animals

- **Limits** of the scope of this guide:
- The guide is not intended to serve as best practices guidelines or to instruct or advise a campus on this topic. The scope is educational and meant to encourage further dialogue among mental health professionals and campus administrators on campuses, so that each campus can develop policies that are appropriate to their setting and students.



Animals on Campus: Guide Outline

- Background:
- Definitions
- Review of current literature and research
- What are the considerations for an institution?
- Medical Aspects
- Legal Aspects
- Review of relevant laws and legal cases to be aware of
- Potential problems, including ethical issues
- Case studies



Development of New Guide- Soliciting Feedback

- QUESTIONS?
- THOUGHTS?
- IDEAS?
- ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED IN NEW GUIDE?
- ISSUES THAT HAVE COME UP
- ADVISORY BOARD: CALL FOR MEMBERS

Resources



TELEMENTAL HEALTH
INSTITUTE

APA Guidelines for the Practice of Telepsychology (APA, 2013).

<http://www.apa.org/practice/guidelines/telepsychology.aspx>

NBCC Policy Regarding the Provision of Distance Professional Services.

<http://www.nbcc.org/Assets/Ethics/NBCCPolicyRegardingPracticeofDistanceCounselingBoard.pdf>

State Telehealth Laws and Medicaid Program Policies: A Comprehensive Scan of the 50 States and District of Columbia

<http://cchpca.org/sites/default/files/resources/50%20State%20FINAL%20April%202016.pdf>

Zur Institute. Reviewing the Debate on Skype & HIPAA Compliance and Introducing the Alternative Option

http://www.zurinstitute.com/skype_telehealth.html

Resources

ATA State Telemedicine Legislation

Tracker https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/AMERICANTELEMED/3c09839a-fffd-46f7-916c-692c11d78933/UploadedImages/Policy/State%20Policy%20Resource%20Center/state-legislation-matrix_2016.pdf

Map of states and their friendliness toward telemental and behavioral health <http://www.americantelemed.org/news-landing/2016/06/30/new-gaps-report-telemental-2016>

American Telemedicine Association (2009). *Evidence Based Practice for Telemental Health*. <http://www.americantelemed.org/docs/default-source/standards/evidence-based-practice-for-telemental-health.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

SAMHSA trainings and resources for individuals interested in providing telebehavioral health services.

<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/operations-administration/telebehavioral-health>

<http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/operations-administration/assessment-tools>

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