



10 How to talk to service users about their sexual experiences as part of a direct practice social work intervention

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Choices about sex, from a decision to be celibate to a decision/s to engage in sexual acts, are some of the most fundamental and personal choices that a person can make. Further, sexual abuse is unfortunately prevalent in our society and this usually triggers psychological issues and/or distress that may not emerge until years later. If we are in direct practice with youth to geriatric service users we need to be able to talk with them about this aspect of their lives. (Please note, the workshop does not deal with sexually abused children). This workshop will extend the capabilities of social work direct service practitioners to facilitate these conversations with adults.

Objectives are:

1. To understand sexual activities in a social context at an introductory level.
 2. To extend the technical skills of experienced practitioners in critical reflection about sexual matters.
 3. To extend rapport building skills to introduce the topic of sex with service users.
 4. To extend the technical skill of assessment in experienced practitioners by learning how to take a sexual history.
 5. To introduce practitioners to possible pathways for intervention.
- Participants will explore sexual acts as political, cultural, psychological and biological phenomena.
 - Participants will gain an understanding of their own political and cultural assumptions about sexual acts and how this impacts on the therapeutic conversation.
 - Participants will then use this knowledge to extend their skills of rapport building and assessment to include the taking of a sexual history with adults
 - Participants will be introduced to possible pathways of intervention for adults.