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Summary report on the identified skill needs and learning outcomes



DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Project Acronym:	REMCO
Project Name:	Upskilling counselling workers for remote, online services provision
Project Code:	KA220-VET-796239F9
Title of document:	Summary report on the identified skill needs and learning outcomes
Result type:	Report
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Date of delivery:	14.12.2022
Result type:	R1-T4 Definition of REMCO learning outcomes based on skill needs analysis (M6-M8)
Activity leader:	bit Schulungscenter GmbH
Dissemination level:	Shared internally via project management platform for the moment
Summary:	The main purpose of the deliverable is to present the identified skill needs and define the REMCO learning outcomes.

Document History

Version	Date	Changes	Type of change	Delivered by
1	08.09.2022			Natalie Volkmann
2	14.12.2022	Rephrasing one objective (Self-Care)		Laura Reutler

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INTRODUCTION

In the following report, the identified skill needs of mental health workers and the resulting required learning outcomes are described in more detail. The required skills of mental health workers have already been identified through a survey. The report will subsequently define the fine learning objectives in more detail and provide the basis for the development of the curriculum. An exact sequence has not yet been determined.

SKILL NEEDS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The survey identified many of the skills needed by mental health workers to deliver mental health services online. Important points that came out of the survey were the hardware skills of the mental health worker, the relationship between therapist and patient, and data protection regulations. Many also agreed that they would like to see an opportunity for further training in the area of mental health services on the Internet.

For this reason, the rough structure of the learning course was defined in a workshop. First, mental health workers should get an overview of the structure of distance counselling. Subsequently, the topic of communication should be addressed in the course, as this was a concern from the survey, among others, because it is feared that the relationship between therapist and patient suffers under remote counselling. In order to be best prepared for the new environment, basic digital skills and tools for distance counselling should be covered in the course. Furthermore, ethical standards and legal principles need to be explained in more detail. Subsequently, there should be a separate learning package that only deals with the relationship work in distance counselling in order to take away the participants' fear of the new situation as much as possible. Finally, the topic of self-care should be addressed, as the distinction between work and everyday life threatens to become blurred in distance counselling and the distance counsellors suffer as a result. The following topics were defined for this purpose:

1. Remote counselling structure
2. Communication
3. Digital Basics and tools
4. Ethics and legal practice
5. Relationships
6. Self-care



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
REMOTE COUNSELLING STRUCTURE	How to start online counselling	You know how to set up online distance counselling.
		You know which methods you can use for online counselling.
		You are able to make initial contact via online media.
	Differences between online and offline counselling	You can explain the difference between online and offline counselling.
	Possibilities and Limitations	You know the possibilities and limitations of distance counselling.
	Awareness about differences in individuals	You are able to respond to different individuals and their needs.



Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
COMMUNICATION	Effective verbal communication and how to maintain effective communication	You know how to communicate verbally in distance counselling and which aspects are important.
		You know how to give effective instructions to your clients.
		You know the rules of online communication.
	Non-Verbal communication	You can describe the levels of non-verbal communication.
		You are able to interpret non-verbal signals.
	Prejudice cues and awareness about differences in individuals	You have considered prejudice signals in communication.
		You respect the different individuals and can deal with the differences in a reflective way.
		You know the process of stereotyped thinking.
		You know how stereotyped thinking affects distance counselling.



Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
DIGITAL BASICS AND TOOLS	Hardware skills	You can name the hardware of a computer.
		You know the difference between hardware and software.
		You know the necessary hardware for professional remote counselling.
	Software skills	You are able to handle the basic software of a computer.
		You are able to name the most common online meeting tools.
		You know useful communication software for online remote counselling.
		You know the different possibilities of counselling in an online environment
		You can identify which tools you can use to improve your remote counselling.
		You know Microsoft Teams and how to use the functions
	How to guide clients	You know Zoom and how to use the functions.
		You can guide learners on how to use hardware and software for online remote counselling.
		You can instruct clients on the technical procedures.
	Troubleshooting	You can find suitable tools for remote counselling of clients.
		You are able to deal with disruptions in remote counselling.
		You know how to deal with software failure in remote counselling.
You are prepared for connection failures.		
		You are able to guide clients during technical disruptions.



Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
ETHICS AND LEGAL MATTERS	Privacy / Security	You know the definition of Data Privacy.
		You understand the meaning and purpose of Data Privacy.
		You know what personal and sensitive data are.
	Secure environment and confidentiality	You can guide clients to find a safe place at home.
		You are able to point out the risks of the digital space to clients.
	Awareness of ethical issues in online counselling	You know how to deal with the principle of autonomy in online counselling.
		You know the ethical principles and what is important in remote counselling.
		You know how to educate clients about online counselling data protection.
	Keeping and protecting client's data	You know what you have to do in case of a breach.
	Documentation / Data management	You know when you have to delete personal and sensitive data of your clients.
	You know on what legal grounds you are allowed to process data of your clients.	
	You know the methods of data management and data transfer (encryption, firewalls, passwords, virus protection).	



Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
RELATIONSHIPS	Recognize signs of possible difficulties	You will be familiar with different online behavioural issues scenarios and possible solutions to these.
	Establish inclusion criteria	You know which clients can participate in remote counselling.
	Building and maintaining effective relationships	You will know how to introduce yourself and establish a base for development of the relationship.
	How to gather feedback/opinions of client	You know how to use tools for feedback.
		You know when to use tools for feedback.



Learning unit	Learning objectives	Fine Learning Objectives
SELF-CARE	Self-care as an online counsellor and signs of exhaustion, burn-out and what could be done	You know forms of self-care.
		You can name vulnerable points.
		You can recognise and assess the risks and dangers of the job.
	Self-promotion of online counselling	You know the promotional guidelines of counselling.
		You and your clients will know how to apply ergonomics in order to optimize efficiency of online lessons.
		You can name ways of acquiring clients.
	Setting boundaries	You are able to set priorities.
		You can distance yourself from the hopes and expectations of clients in online counselling.
		You know what possibilities there are to keep a healthy distance.
	Specificity of online counselling	You are able to develop an efficient routine for working from home.
You know methods to draw a line between work and private life when remote counselling.		



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Work-Life balance

You are able to distinguish between private and professional life in order to separate the two effectively.



CONCLUSION

The six defined learning packages provide a good basis for mental health workers and can be used independently. It is important to provide specially adapted training material for the target group. Great attention is paid to relationship building and the lack of verbal and non-verbal exchange. Furthermore, the programme also refers to self-care and everyday life with distance counselling and makes suggestions for better practicability. Since most of the distance counselling is done through digital media, there is a big learning package with a lot of soft- and hardware skills and the legal issues.