

# Chapter 28

## Intervention

# A definition of Intervention

- An organized effort
- By person or persons who are part of the addicted person's environment
- Break through the walls of denial and rationalization which surround the addictive behaviors
- Which is often supervised by a trained professional with the goal of obtaining an agreement from the addicted person to
- Immediately seek admission to a designated treatment center

# A brief history of Intervention

- Once thought person with SUD would not be receptive until they hit bottom
- Idea is to intervene before the person has to hit by confronting them in a supportive way to convince the to seek treatment

# Characteristics of the Intervention Process

- Depends on the settings and the individuals involved
- Goals must be stated
- It can be simple-a suggestion from a physician
- An ultimatum from a spouse
- Or a planned group intervention

# The mechanics of interventions

- Each participant affirms their concern for the individual with the SUD
- They express a desire that the person seek help
- Carried out without malice
- Participants need to agree in advance of the goals
- Decisions about the proper response to the patient's objections and an agency to refer the individual to should be resolved prior to the start of the intervention

# The mechanics of intervention

- Individually confronting an addicted person most often is futile
- Collectively confronting an addicted person often result in reducing denial, rationalization, threats, and other defense mechanisms
- No malice in the intervention process
- Each participant has the right to choose how he/she will respond should the addicted person decide to continue using chemicals
- Should be specific examples

# The ethics of intervention

- Fraught with ethical dilemmas
- Informed consent
- Data privacy
- Conflict of interest
- Counselor's qualifications

# Some common forms of intervention

- Family intervention
  - The professional will coordinate the intervention sessions such as who will present information and in which order
  - There may be damage to family relationships as a result
  - Without Malice and in a non-judgmental manner

# Some common forms of intervention

- The Johnson Model
  - Most often associated with the word Intervention
  - 3-4 rehearsals before the actual intervention
  - Participants are educated about the disease model of addiction, reducing the potential for anger or malice
  - Family members are encouraged to bring written notes
    - Very specific statements
    - Role playing may be helpful
    - Result in a commitment to enter treatment only about 30% of the time

# Some common forms of intervention

- The ARISE Model
  - This is a three stage model of intervention in which the level of pressure applied by the family to encourage the affected member to enter treatment is gradually increased
  - Based on the concept of a graduated series of contact with the patient over a period of time with the goal of securing the addicted person's entry into treatment
  - In the third phase it is more confrontational comparable to the Johnson model

# Intervention by the legal system

- Intervention via the Court System
  - External motivation
  - Either/or condition
- Third party payers might refuse payment
- Court order involuntary commitment
- Other form of intervention
- Usually viewed as a punitive response
- Court mandated clients have been found to have experienced fewer negative consequences to their substance use than do clients without legal pressure

# Intervention by the legal system

- Court Mandated Treatment
  - Many insurance companies are by law, able to refuse to pay for court mandated treatment
  - Not a guarantee of long term abstinence since long term abstinence rates for those who complete treatment at the invitation of the Courts appear to be the same as voluntary patients
  - Coerced abstinence
  - Raises questions about the relationship between the law and the rehabilitation industry

# Intervention by the legal system

- The Drug Court model is to:
  - Identify substance abusing offenders and place them under strict court monitoring and community supervision, coupled with long-term treatment services during which the drug court participant undergoes an intense regimen of substance abuse and mental health treatment, case management, drug testing and probation supervision while reporting to regularly scheduled status hearings before a judge with specialized expertise in the drug court model

# Intervention by the legal system

- Drug Court
  - Such programs are effective for first-time, non-violent offenders with the goal of avoiding the “revolving door” cycle of repeat offenses
  - There has been some dispute concerning the effectiveness of the Drug Court programs, which are both labor and time intensive.

# Intervention by the legal system

- Drug Court
  - One problem with the “Drug court” concept is that it is based on the theory that the substance abuse treatment programs that the clients are referred to are very effective
  - Finally, the issue of the individual’s motivation for participation in a “Drug Court” program must be considered.

# Intervention by the legal system

- Court Mandatory Involuntary Treatment
  - Imminent danger of self or others
  - Varies from state to state
  - There is a very real chance that the client will simply comply with treatment expectations in order to escape the Court's supervision as rapidly as possible, without making any permanent changes in their substance use behaviors

# Other forms of Intervention

- Contingency Management Techniques are often very effective
- Either/or forms of external pressure
- Employer Mandated Treatment-employees may be threatened to be fired if under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job.
- A company with just 500 employees with typically spend \$133,000 in health care costs for alcohol-related problems among employees each year

# Reactions Against the concept of Intervention

- When does coercion be justified?
- First-do no harm
- Coercion has become such an accepted tool used by mental health or medical professionals it now does not raise ethical questions from those who wield that power