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Generalist Social Work Practice I with Individuals and Families

Reflection #5

1. Although the term diagnosis has been commonly used in the social work profession, assessment is the preferred term. Some social workers feel that diagnosis is a term that does not involve the strengths perspective. A diagnosis, unlike an assessment, speaks to a medical illness, disease, or disorder. This does not take into account more specific aspects of the individual or their circumstances. Social workers often view the term diagnosis as limiting.

2. Evidence based practice allows for social workers to utilize evidence supporting different interventions in their practice. It is important that social workers rely on evidence and tested theories when considering the best treatment plan for a client. Without relying on evidence, a social worker can be swayed by their own bias or opinion that has no factual evidence supporting it.

There are five steps when utilizing the evidence based practice process. First, a social worker takes the information she knows about the client and their situation and turns it into questions about background information or effectiveness of a policy/intervention. Then, the social worker needs to locate the answer to these questions by doing research. The third step is appraising the evidence. Fourth, the social worker applies the evidence to practice situations. This allows for them to implement their treatment plan or intervention and see how effective it is. Lastly, the

social worker evaluates the process. This should be done with input from the client to see how effective the treatment plan was. This allows for the social worker to reflect on the results.

3. If a client threatens suicide, a social worker must perform a risk assessment. During the assessment, the social worker asks the client questions about thoughts they have had about death or suicide. Then, the social worker must inquire if the client has a plan, a timeframe, or the means to carry out the plan. It is also important to discuss the client's family history and if they have ever attempted suicide in the past. Based on this assessment, the social worker can determine if the client has a plan and if they could feasibly carry that out. If the client has not thought about a plan or timeframe and they do not have the means to carry it out, the social worker can create a no-suicide contract. If the client has thought through a plan to take their own life and they have the means to do it, a social worker should facilitate hospitalization to protect the safety of the client.