

Peer Support Specialist Course Outline: Substance Abuse and Co-Morbidities

Target Populations: Malaysian and Filipino Audiences

Course Overview

This course trains individuals to become Peer Support Specialists (PSS) focusing on substance abuse and co-morbidities (e.g., mental health disorders, chronic illnesses). It is tailored for Malaysian and Filipino populations, incorporating cultural nuances, local resources, and community-based approaches. The course duration is 8 weeks, with 3-hour weekly sessions, combining theoretical learning, practical activities, and assessments.

Course Objectives

- Equip participants with knowledge and skills to support individuals with substance abuse and co-morbidities.
 - Foster culturally sensitive peer support practices.
 - Develop communication, empathy, and crisis intervention skills.
 - Prepare participants to collaborate with healthcare systems and community organizations.
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Course Outline

Module 1: Introduction to Peer Support and Substance Abuse

- **Duration:** Week 1 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Understand the role of a Peer Support Specialist.
 - Identify common substances abused in Malaysia (e.g., methamphetamine, kratom) and the Philippines (e.g., shabu, marijuana).
 - Recognize co-morbidities (e.g., depression, anxiety, HIV/AIDS).
- **Methodologies:**
 - Lecture with case studies (Malaysia: kratom use in rural areas; Philippines: shabu in urban slums).
 - Group discussion on cultural stigma around addiction.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Role-play a community dialogue addressing stigma in a kampung setting.

- **Philippines:** Storytelling session sharing recovery experiences in a barangay context.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Quiz on substance abuse terminology and PSS roles (10 questions, multiple-choice).
 - Reflective journal entry (200 words) on personal perceptions of addiction.

Module 2: Cultural Competence and Community Resources

- **Duration:** Week 2 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Apply culturally sensitive communication strategies.
 - Identify local support resources (e.g., Malaysia: AADK, Pengasih; Philippines: DOH, DSWD).
- **Methodologies:**
 - Interactive workshop on cultural values (Malaysia: collectivism, Islamic principles; Philippines: bayanihan, family-centric values).
 - Guest speaker from a local NGO.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Create a resource map of local addiction support services.
 - **Philippines:** Design a community outreach poster in Filipino/Tagalog.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Group presentation on a local resource (5 minutes per group).
 - Self-assessment checklist on cultural competence.

Module 3: Communication and Empathy Skills

- **Duration:** Week 3 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Practice active listening and motivational interviewing.
 - Develop empathy through lived experience sharing.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Role-playing with feedback (scenarios tailored to local contexts).
 - Guided meditation on empathy.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Pair activity practicing motivational interviewing in Bahasa Malaysia.
 - **Philippines:** Role-play a family mediation session in a Filipino household.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Peer feedback form on role-play performance.
 - Written scenario response (150 words) on de-escalating a client's frustration.

Module 4: Co-Morbidities and Mental Health

- **Duration:** Week 4 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Understand common co-morbidities (e.g., PTSD, bipolar disorder).

- Recognize signs of mental health crises.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Case study analysis (Malaysia: PTSD in former inmates; Philippines: depression in OFW families).
 - Video-based learning on mental health symptoms.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Group discussion on Islamic counseling approaches for mental health.
 - **Philippines:** Create a mental health first-aid checklist for community use.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Case study response (200 words) identifying co-morbidity signs.
 - Quiz on mental health terminology (10 questions).

Module 5: Crisis Intervention and Safety Planning

- **Duration:** Week 5 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Learn de-escalation techniques for crises (e.g., overdose, suicidal ideation).
 - Develop safety plans for clients.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Simulation-based training with mock crises.
 - Workshop on creating safety plans.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Simulate an overdose response in a rural clinic setting.
 - **Philippines:** Draft a safety plan for a client in a typhoon-prone area.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Practical assessment: Demonstrate de-escalation in a 5-minute simulation.
 - Safety plan submission (1-page template).

Module 6: Ethics and Boundaries

- **Duration:** Week 6 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Understand ethical guidelines for PSS (confidentiality, professionalism).
 - Set healthy boundaries with clients.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Group discussion on ethical dilemmas (e.g., Malaysia: family pressure; Philippines: gift-giving culture).
 - Lecture on boundary-setting frameworks.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Debate on confidentiality in close-knit communities.
 - **Philippines:** Role-play refusing inappropriate client requests.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Ethical dilemma essay (300 words).
 - Boundary-setting checklist completion.

Module 7: Collaboration with Healthcare Systems

- **Duration:** Week 7 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Navigate healthcare and rehabilitation systems.
 - Advocate for clients' needs.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Panel discussion with healthcare professionals.
 - Case study on system navigation.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Mock referral to AADK or hospital services.
 - **Philippines:** Simulate a DOH rehabilitation program application.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Referral letter draft (200 words).
 - Group quiz on healthcare system processes.

Module 8: Capstone and Certification

- **Duration:** Week 8 (3 hours)
- **Learning Objectives:**
 - Synthesize skills through a capstone project.
 - Prepare for PSS certification.
- **Methodologies:**
 - Project-based learning.
 - Peer and instructor feedback.
- **Activities:**
 - **Malaysia:** Present a community-based peer support initiative.
 - **Philippines:** Develop a barangay-level recovery support group plan.
- **Assessment Tools:**
 - Capstone project presentation (10 minutes).
 - Final reflective essay (500 words) on personal growth as a PSS.

Expectations for Students

- **Attendance:** Attend at least 90% of sessions.
 - **Participation:** Actively engage in discussions, role-plays, and group activities.
 - **Assignments:** Submit all assessments on time (quizzes, essays, projects).
 - **Professionalism:** Demonstrate respect, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity.
 - **Certification:** Achieve a minimum of 70% on assessments and complete the capstone project.
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Condensed Teacher's Guide

Preparation

- **Materials:** Slides, case studies, role-play scripts, local resource lists.
- **Cultural Adaptation:**
 - **Malaysia:** Incorporate Islamic values, Bahasa Malaysia terminology, and rural community contexts.
 - **Philippines:** Use Filipino/Tagalog, family-oriented scenarios, and urban/rural barangay settings.
- **Guest Speakers:** Invite local NGO representatives or recovered peers.

Delivery Tips

- **Engagement:** Use storytelling and local examples to connect with students.
- **Flexibility:** Adapt scenarios based on students' lived experiences.
- **Feedback:** Provide constructive, culturally sensitive feedback on assessments.
- **Safety:** Ensure a safe space for discussing sensitive topics (e.g., stigma, trauma).

Assessment Guidelines

- **Quizzes:** Grade objectively (70% passing score).
- **Essays/Journals:** Evaluate for clarity, cultural relevance, and application of concepts.
- **Practical Assessments:** Use rubrics focusing on empathy, communication, and problem-solving.
- **Capstone:** Assess creativity, feasibility, and alignment with PSS principles.

Resources

- **Malaysia:** AADK guidelines, Pengasih recovery manuals, Islamic counseling frameworks.
 - **Philippines:** DOH addiction treatment protocols, DSWD community programs, local church-based support groups.
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Notes on Cultural Tailoring

- **Malaysia:**
 - Emphasize Islamic principles (e.g., taubah, community support).
 - Address rural-urban divides and kratom-specific challenges.
 - Use Bahasa Malaysia for accessibility.
- **Philippines:**
 - Highlight bayanihan and family roles in recovery.
 - Address shabu prevalence and post-Duterte drug war stigma.
 - Use Filipino/Tagalog and regional dialects where relevant.

