



 **Administrative  
Issues**

Chapter 7

- \* How can we reduce our recording cost?
  - \* The cost of recordkeeping is generated by:
    - \* The time clerical workers, direct service workers, supervisors, and other administrators spend producing, storing, retrieving, and using information from records

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* The time practitioners and administrators spend developing, implementing, and evaluating record content, structure, and procedure
- \* Equipment (e.g., computer hardware and software)
- \* Supplies (e.g., paper)
- \* Facilities (e.g., storage space)
- \* Consultation, training, and support

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* Agencies can reduce their recordkeeping costs by identifying ways to be more economical in any or all of these areas.
- \* In some agencies, workers reported spending as much as 50% of their time on recording and other recordkeeping tasks.

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* During the 1980s and early 1990s, agencies began computerizing their records, although few organizations had fully automated recordkeeping systems.
- \* Some areas appear to be prime targets for time and cost-cutting.

## \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* Eliminate redundancy
- \* Discourage overdocumentation
- \* Substitute brief forms, checklist, and outlines for open-ended narratives.
- \* Provide templates for assessments, goals, service plans, tracking movement, and outcomes. Exhibit 7.1

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* Streamline documentation of routine cases.
  - \* Develop a short form for documentation of brief, time-limited, and routine services involves four basis steps.
    - \* The organization established criteria for using a short form

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

- \* Those involved in service delivery and program management outline the steps or procedures that are ordinary taken in providing the designated service
- \* The organization develops a short recording form using checklists with quires and responses to document such cases Page 202 bottom
- \* The form is tested out in practice, and then revised, before becoming a part of the agency's recordkeeping system

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping



- \* Agencies may need to make additional cost reductions
  - \* Clerical support
  - \* Computers
  - \* Explicit guidelines for the content of records

# \* The Cost of Recordkeeping

\* *How can we assure that our records are secure?*

\* Security requires a system of administrative, physical, and technical procedures against unwarranted access to, release of, or tampering with personal information

# \* The Security of Records

- \* Security is only as strong as its weakest component
- \* Security should be a high priority but must be balanced against cost and convenience
- \* Security is a moving target
- \* The HIPAA Security Rule established standards for managing computerized protected health information security

# \*The Security of Records

- \* Once information is released to another agency or entity, its security can no longer be ensured. Prior to releasing information, practitioners and agency should inform the client of any risks involved.
- \* Any document in which the client is identified should be physically safe-guarded from unwarranted access.
- \* Records should be stored in low traffic areas.

# \* The Security of Records

- \* Paper records and notes should be locked up when they are not in use and at the end of the work day.
- \* Computerized records require special safeguards. Computers screens should be filtered or turn away from view, and computers should be set to time out or shut down automatically.

# \*The Security of Records

- \* Computers that are linked to the internet to permit e-mail exchanges, information searches, and data transfers are especially vulnerable to security breaches.
- \* Careful use of cell phones, PDAs or other mobile devices
- \* Agencies must ensure that confidential information that is being transferred to another agency or system is encrypted, and that the transfer medium is secure

# \*The Security of Records

*\* How are social work agencies and departments using computers?*

\* Business and office management

\* Agency Management

\* Client Tracking, decision support, and caseload management

\* Client records

# \* Computers and Records

\* *Our agency's records contain a wealth of information. Should we encourage their use in research?*

\* Before initiating any study using records as a source of data, agencies and investigators need to undertake four important processes.

# \* Records in Research



- \* Assess whether information in records is suitable for the purposes of research.
- \* Complete an institutional review board (IRB) review.
- \* Institute human subject protections, using HIPAA consent forms where appropriate

# \* Records in Research

- \* Establish procedures to mask clients' identities and otherwise ensure that personally identifiable information is handled confidentially.
- \* Records can be good source of data to answer such questions as:
  - \* Who are the agency's clients?
  - \* Where do clients come from (referral in)?

# \* Records in Research

- \* Where do clients go (referral out)?
- \* What service do clients receive?
- \* How are agency resources being used?
- \* How are clients, needs, purposes, goals, processes, and outcomes defined?

# \* Records in Research

- \* They may also be used to answer questions about adherence to establish policies, procedures, and standards?
- \* Is the agency adhering to privacy guidelines?
- \* Are practitioners documenting needed information?
- \* Are records up-to-date?

# \* Records in Research

\* Many factors can undermine the suitability of agency records for research.

\* Time lag

\* Subjectivity

\* The context of information gathering

\* Selectivity

\* Consistency

\* Ease of Access

# \* Records in Research