

November 2021 Newsletter

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I can't believe it's mid- November already. When I started writing this Newsletter, it was October 25th-- Where did the time go? There's so much in the news relevant to our practices, but in an effort to stay focused on my original message for this month's Newsletter, I am going to refrain from trying to address any recent/upcoming changes until next month. Because this Newsletter is being released mid-month, the December Newsletter will come out sometime before the New Year. Don't forget that all previous newsletters are available @ <https://www.leslietsukroff.com/resources>

Missed A Recent Workshop?

Workshop recordings are now available. Visit <https://www.leslietsukroff.com/workshop-videos> to rent

"Audit Proof Progress Notes: An In-Depth Look at Documentation and Record Keeping in Private Practice." When you rent this 1 hour webinar, you will receive the original presentation slides and a **FREE** Progress Note Template for \$40.00.

"Are You Ready For An Audit? Diagnosing, Documenting, Billing and Coding In Private Practice." When you rent this 4 hour webinar, you will receive the original presentation slides and a **FREE** document that provides detailed guidelines on how to draft your private practice financial policy for \$100.00.

Pre-recorded webinars are not eligible for CEU credit.

Did You Know That Leslie S. Tsukroff, MSW, LCSW Provides Individual Consultations?

Wrestling with an **ethical dilemma**? Questions regarding your **private practice**? Thinking of **launching, modifying or expanding** your private practice? **Feeling overwhelmed,**

burned-out and want to make changes, but don't know where to begin? Need help as you **create/revise your practice policies and procedures?** Winding down towards **retirement?** Looking for clinical guidance from a **Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over 28 years of experience?** Contact me to discuss your needs.

I'm here to support you every step of the way!

Ethics Matters- Preparing for 2022

As we approach the upcoming holidays, **it's time to think about our business goals for 2022.** If you are like me, and I assume most of you are, you haven't had much bandwidth since the onset of the pandemic to focus on the business of running your practice.

In March 2020, most of us "hit the ground running" and haven't really slowed down. So many of you have even launched your private practices within the past 2 years and have reached out for guidance on how to work smarter not harder. **I am repeatedly hearing clinicians say that they feel "overworked" and "exhausted" and that they "took on too many clients," "haven't had enough time off to recover" and "don't have any time to dedicate to thinking about goals for their practice."**

So, I am here to remind you that this is a step that we don't want to skip again this year. Why? **Because this lack of attention to our businesses inevitably leads to burn out, resentment, and could place our businesses vulnerable to malpractice risk.**

Helpful Hints to Start Out the New Year on the Right Foot

I highly recommend that you obtain written informed consent from all existing clients 1 time per year and the New Year is the perfect time to do this.

Think:

- Consent for treatment
- financial, communication/use of technology and remote therapy policies
- HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices
- in-office therapy safety requirements/protocols
- Communication preferences
- ROIs

Update all practice policies and forms. Now is the time to review ALL existing practice policies and update any forms that might be out of date. Chances are you have either modified your business practices recently or have been thinking about doing this. Do all of

your policies match up? Oftentimes, when I am reviewing consultee's practice policies, I find discrepancies between documents. Having contradictory statements in your policies may lead to those policies being deemed "null and void".

Be sure to take the time to really assess critical items including, but not limited to:

- Cancellation, sick, vacation, office hours, and emergency policies
- Reimbursement such as fees, payment requirements/procedures, credit cards, status with insurance companies and services typically not reimbursable by insurance companies
- Telehealth services such as limitations due to insurance, client location and licensing requirements
- Use of technology and communication polices
- Expectations for in-person services, including disclosures, health and safety processes and obligations of all parties

Raising fees? If you are planning to raise your fees January 1st, now is the time to determine your increase, advise your clients (in writing and in person) of the upcoming rate increase and start working on your updated fee agreement. The standard of care suggests that we provide clients with ample notice of fee increases or changes in reimbursement procedures.

Update clients' information.

On or before the New Year:

- Obtain a copy of your clients' new insurance card
- Update medical, medication, adjunctive treatment provider/prescriber information
- Review, assess and revise existing treatment plans and re-evaluate diagnosis (es)
- Verify clients' addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses and emergency contacts
- **For those who work with minors, confirm current age and when clients will reach the age of majority, as new consents for treatment and/or ROIs may be required**

Wishing you and the ones you love a holiday season that brings joy, health and peace.

**Best-
Leslie**

This document is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be used as advice (legal, ethical or technical) or as a substitute for the guidance of an attorney or an individualized consultation. It does not address all possible clinical, legal and ethical issues that may arise, nor does it take into consideration the particular circumstances, nuances or concerns of the situation or person(s) involved. Leslie S.

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