

Family Violence Competency and Training Framework

The Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) launched the Mandatory Counselling Programme (MCP) Practice Guide in March 2007. The practice guide details the operational and philosophical aspects of providing mandatory counselling and the professional standards expected by agencies. MCYS also announced the minimum level of training that all staff providing MCP have to undergo by 2009. In line with this, SSTI will launch the Certificate in Family Violence Mandatory Counselling Programme from April 2007. Exemptions would be applicable for practitioners who had undergone training or demonstrated prior experience in family violence work.

Family Violence Training and Competency Framework Overview

Together with the launch of the practice guide and the Certificate, SSTI developed the Family Violence Competency and Training Framework. The framework identifies the major job areas and knowledge and skills needed by staff providing family violence work. It also suggests training programmes staff could undergo to equip themselves with the relevant competencies needed.

The framework is divided into two main parts

(a) Core Competencies and (b) Specialised Competencies.

The core competencies outline the competencies required to manage MCP cases. However, staff managing voluntary family violence (FV) cases can also refer to the core competencies as a guide to eventually manage complex FV cases. The Certificate in Family Violence Mandatory Counselling Programme will equip staff with the core competencies stated in the framework. The specialised competencies are competencies required to manage FV cases for specific client groups or specific methods of intervention. They build on the core competencies required to provide MCP services. Practitioners who have to handle FV cases other than MCP cases could refer to these competencies as a guide.

Limitations to Framework

The competencies and training stated in the framework are neither exhaustive nor contextualised. Different agencies may find some competencies more relevant than others depending on their focus of practice. The training programmes listed are subject to changes and updates as the practice of family violence counselling continues to evolve.

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Core Competencies

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>1. Managing Processes of Family Violence Cases</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Receive referrals from Family and Juvenile Court/MCYS (for mandated cases) b. Arrange Counselling Sessions with Clients c. Handling Court Review of Current Cases d. Transfer Clients to other Agencies where Needed e. Provide Casework Support f. Provide Follow-up Service g. Conduct Case Closure and Submit Report of Mandatory Counselling to Family Court and MCYS 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Overview of Family Violence Counselling Process and objectives of Mandatory Counselling b. Knowledge of case referral process from referral Agencies e.g. MCYS (Refer to Annex J of Practice Guide) c. Knowledge of case transfer process from own agency to other agencies (e.g. to CAMP) d. Knowledge of legal framework and definition of family violence e. Knowledge of Women’s Charter, Chapter 353, Section 65 and Penal Code, Chapter 224 f. Knowledge of Mandatory Counselling Review Form completion procedures for Court Review Purposes g. Knowledge of terminating counselling sessions h. Knowledge of guidelines of breach cases (refer to Annex M of Practice Guide) i. Knowledge of requirements of Mandatory Counselling Report form and format (refer to Annex N of Practice Guide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management of Family Violence – Introduction b. Certificate in Management of Family Violence

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. Knowledge and overview of community partners and resources to assist perpetrators, victims and witnesses of family violence k. Knowledge of warrant of arrest procedures 	
<p><u>2. Risk and Needs Assessment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct Risk and Needs Assessment for Client 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ability to apply appropriate assessment tools (e.g. Domestic Violence Behaviour Checklist, SARA etc) b. Ability to assess level of risks for client through various indicators (e.g. history of violence, lethality of methods of violence etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management of Family Violence – Introduction b. Certificate in Management of Family Violence

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <p>a. Ability to select and recommend appropriate new assessment tools for use</p>	
<p><u>3. Counselling and Intervention (Victims)</u></p> <p>a. Develop an Appropriate Intervention Plan for Victim</p> <p>b. Refer Cases to Crisis Shelters</p> <p>c. Conduct Counselling Sessions for Victim, which should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressing Safety Issues and Developing Safety Plan with Victim 2. Identifying Cues/Warning Signs with Victim 3. Educating Victim on Definition of Violence and Impact of Violence 4. Assisting victims to understand effects of violence 5. Managing resistant victims 6. Examining Socialisation and Challenging Myths/Beliefs of Violence 7. Power and Control Issues 8. Future Planning 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Ability to consider the following factors before developing intervention plan: goals of intervention, assessment reports, involvement of team partners in intervention plan, the intervention approach adopted</p> <p>b. Knowledge of procedures for referral of cases to crisis shelters (refer to form P of Practice Guide)</p> <p>c. Skills in managing cases with victim – responsiveness, assuring victims, communicating concern to victim, exploring safely concerns with victim</p> <p>d. Knowledge and skills of counselling approaches (e.g. individual psychological model, family systems theory, educational pro-feminist, cognitive-behavioural groups etc)</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <p>a. Skills to adapt from various counselling approaches during counselling sessions and make appropriate adjustments where needed</p>	<p>a. Management of Family Violence – Introduction</p> <p>b. Certificate in Management of Family Violence</p>

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Skills in arranging for alternative intervention if counselling does not work c. Knowledge of worker safety and self-care issues 	
<p><u>4. Counselling and Intervention (Perpetrators)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop an Appropriate Intervention Plan for Perpetrator b. Arrange for Worker Safety Plan for Self for Contingency Purposes c. Conduct Counselling Sessions for Perpetrator, which should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educating Perpetrator on Definition of Violence 2. Addressing Blaming, Denial and Minimising of Violence 3. Addressing Impact of Violence 4. Inviting Perpetrators to take Responsibility for Violence 5. Developing Self-Control Plan and Skills Learning 6. Power and Control Issues 7. Challenging Stereotypes on Gender Roles and Intimacy in Relationships 8. Positive Non-Violent Role for Children 9. Future Plan in Sustaining Non-Violence 10. Managing Resistant Perpetrators 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ability to consider the following factors before developing intervention plan: goals of intervention, assessment reports, involvement of team partners in intervention plan, the intervention approach adopted b. Skills in managing cases with perpetrators – addressing blame and encouraging perpetrators to take responsibility for violence, assuring perpetrators, managing of volatile sessions and emotional reactivity etc c. Ability to select and apply counselling approaches (e.g. individual psychological model, family systems theory, educational pro-feminist, cognitive-behavioural groups etc) d. Knowledge of worker safety and self-care issues <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Skills to adapt from various counselling approaches during counselling sessions and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Management of Family Violence – Introduction a. Certificate in Management of Family Violence

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<p>make appropriate adjustments where needed</p> <p>b. Skills to arrange for alternative intervention for clients if counselling does not work</p>	

Specialised Competencies – Children Witnesses and Victims of Violence

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>1. Working with Children</u></p> <p>a. Engaging and Communicating with Children</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Knowledge of child development and psychopathology theories</p> <p>b. Knowledge of the worldview of children (e.g. types of television programmes for children and what they mean to children, major trends pertaining to children etc)</p> <p>c. Knowledge of types of programmes and services available for children</p> <p>d. Engagement/communication skills and techniques</p>	<p>a. Management of Family Violence - Talking to Children and Managing Abuse Related Disclosure</p>
<p><u>2. Assessing Risks</u></p> <p>a. Assess clients for Safety, Physical Abuse, Neglect, Emotional Abuse and Sexual Abuse risks</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Assessment knowledge and skills in the areas of safety, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse</p> <p>b. Knowledge of impact of family violence on children and young persons</p> <p>c. Knowledge of Children and Young Persons Act, Penal Code</p>	<p>a. Management of Family Violence – Introduction to Child Abuse and Child Protection</p> <p>b. Management of Family Violence : Sibling Abuse</p>

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>3. Handling Child's Disclosure of Sexual Abuse</u></p> <p>a. Listening and Supporting Children</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Communication and assuring skills</p> <p>b. Knowledge of child's developmental level and ability to gauge child's feelings toward abuser</p>	<p>a. Management of Family Violence – Talking to Children and Managing Abuse Related Disclosure</p>
<p><u>4. Counselling and Programmes for Child Witnesses of Violence and Victims of Violence</u></p> <p>a. Conduct Counselling for Child Witnesses of Violence and Victims</p> <p>b. Develop Safety Plan for Children</p> <p>c. Educating Children on the Definition of Violence</p> <p>d. Addressing and Managing Feelings, Self Esteem Issues of Children</p> <p>e. Submit Mandatory Counselling Report to Family Court and MCYS</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Counselling theories and intervention approaches for children</p> <p>b. Knowledge and skills of developing a safety plan and factors involved in developing a plan with young persons</p> <p>c. Knowledge of child developmental theories</p> <p>d. Techniques in teaching children on managing their feelings and strengthen their self-esteem</p> <p>e. Knowledge of Mandatory Counselling Report form and format (refer to Annex O of Practice Guide)</p> <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <p>a. Supervision skills to supervise new social workers/counsellors</p> <p>b. Skills in developing programmes for engaging child witnesses of violence and victims</p>	<p>b. Management of Family Violence – Introduction to Child Abuse and Child Protection</p>

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>7. Working with Parents (Abusive and Non-Abusive)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assisting Parents to Gain Insights as to how Child Witnesses internalise or externalise effects of exposures to Violence b. Discuss with Parents on History of Exposure of Violence in their Families of Origin c. Develop Safety Plan with Non-Abusive Parents 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communication and mediation skills b. Skills in managing cases with parents (including developing a safety plan) c. Knowledge of worker safety and self-care issues 	
<p><u>8. Working with Resistant Parents (Abuse and Non-Abusive)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assisting parents to overcome their resistance for help 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communication and mediation skills b. Ability to engage parents 	

<p><u>9. Referral of Child Abuse Cases</u></p> <p>a. Refer Child Abuse Cases to Child Protection Services of MCYS</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Knowledge of various circumstances from which child should be referred to MCYS</p> <p>b. Knowledge of information required for case referral</p> <p>c. Knowledge of procedures of case referral</p>	<p>a. Management of Family Violence – Introduction to Child Abuse and Child Protection</p>	
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Specialised Competencies – Working with Abused Elderly

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programme
<p><u>1. Working with Abused Elderly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicating and Engaging Elderly b. Provide Gerontological Counselling and Assessment c. Developing Safety Plan with Elderly d. Managing Bereavement/Grief Process e. Refer Abused Elderly to Sheltered Homes f. Provide Casework Support 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Knowledge of the theories of elder abuse and apply appropriate conceptual framework of assessment b. Knowledge of common geriatric and mental and physical health issues c. Gerontological counselling skills and techniques d. Knowledge of Women’s Charter (Section 65) and Maintenance of Parents Act (Chap 167B) e. Skills in managing processes of elderly abused cases (see Skills in Managing Processes of Family Violence Cases, <Core Competencies, Competency Dimension 1>) f. Referral procedures to Sheltered Homes (refer to Annex Q of Practice Guide) <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a conceptual framework on the intervention processes of assessing and working with abused elderly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management of Family Violence – Elder Abuse Work b. Gerontological Counselling – Introduction c. Gerontological Counselling – Intermediate

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programme
<p><u>2. Referral to Elder Protection Team</u></p> <p>a. Refer Abused Elderly to Elder Protection Team</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Knowledge of referral procedures to Elder Protection Team</p>	
<p><u>3. Working with Caregivers and Family of Client</u></p> <p>a. Discuss with caregivers to understand family situation and abused elderly</p> <p>b. Give basic support and advise to caregivers and family of abused elderly</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Communication skills</p> <p>b. Ability to assess family dynamics</p>	<p>a. Working with Caregivers: Introduction</p>

Other Specialised Competencies

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>1. Groupwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Plan and conduct group work Sessions b. Setting goals during start of groupwork sessions c. Encouraging participants throughout the sessions d. Closure of groupwork sessions 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ability to conduct open group or close group formats b. Ability to assess suitability for clients to attend group work c. Knowledge of group dynamics and stages <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Skills in supervising new social workers/counsellors in facilitating group work sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management of Family Violence – Group Work with Men in Recovery
<p><u>2. Couple Counselling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide couple counselling when necessary 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ability to conduct joint sessions with couples b. Knowledge of theories of couple counselling c. Assessment skills in the suitability of clients for couple counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management of Family Violence: Working with Couples in Violent Relationships

<p><u>3. Stress Management for Clients</u></p> <p>a. Assist Clients in Managing Stresses in Life and their Relationships</p> <p>b. Impart to Clients Relaxation Techniques</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Stress management skills and techniques</p> <p>b. Relaxation skills and techniques</p>		
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Related Competencies (i.e. Not exclusive to Family Violence Counselling)

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
<p><u>1. Addressing Family of Origin Issues with Clients</u></p> <p>a. Discuss with Clients on Family of Origin Issues with regard to Violence</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Knowledge of family origin issues</p> <p>b. Ability to explain the link between socialisation and upbringing with regard to exposure of violence</p> <p>c. Ability to facilitate discussion on impact of violence on clients themselves and its relation to intergenerational violence</p>	
<p><u>2. Communication and Conflict Resolution</u></p> <p>a. Communicate and Mediate between couples to help alleviate Intensity of Conflict and to see each other's Points of View</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Ability to impart to couples basic communication skills such as empathic listening, expressing of feelings and assertive responses</p> <p>b. Basic conflict resolution/mediation skills</p> <p>c. Anger management skills</p>	<p>a. Techniques in Couple Counselling</p>
<p><u>3. Addressing Self-esteem Issues</u></p> <p>a. Identifying and Addressing Concerns with Clients with regard to Self-esteem</p>	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <p>a. Knowledge of issues such as self-esteem, attachment, dependency and intimacy among couples</p>	

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Good observation skills c. Ability to engage clients 	
<p><u>4. Managing Grief/Loss Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assisting clients to manage grief issues resulting from losses in trust/intimacy of relationships, ending of relationships or break up of marriages etc 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Grief management skills 	
<p><u>5. Managing Alcohol and Substance Addictions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assessing for any form of substance or gambling addictions that clients may suffer from and refer such cases to promptly 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Knowledge of different types of addictions and their impact on family violence b. Assessment skills for assessing symptoms of addictions of clients c. Assessment skills to refer clients to specialised agencies for further treatment in addictions e.g. CAMP (refer to Annex H of Practice Guide) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gambling Addictions: Assessment, Brief Interventions and Community Referrals GA-ABC
<p><u>6. Mental Health Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assessing for any mental health issues that clients may suffer from and refer such cases promptly 	<p><u>Basic</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Knowledge of common types of mental health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mental Health First Aid

Competency Dimension	Knowledge and Skills	Relevant SSTI Training Programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Assessing symptoms of mental illnesses of clients c. Assessment skills to refer clients to IMH for further treatment <p><u>Intermediate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ability to work with and support caregivers/family members of clients who have mental illnesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Working with Caregivers: Introduction c. Roles of Families in Psychiatric Rehabilitation