Legal and Ethical Considerations for Group and Family Therapy

Student’s Name:

Institutional Affiliation:
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Psychotherapy is a way of assisting people with emotional difficulties or mental illnesses. There are two types of therapies including individual and group or family therapy. The health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act provides guidance to the practices of nurses in group and family therapy. Some of the legal and ethical considerations including information confidentiality of the client as defined by this act are part of the mental health nurse practitioner's responsibility. This paper discusses the differences in legal and ethical considerations for individual and group/family therapy and how these differences affect therapeutic approaches (American Psychological Association, 2020)

Differences in Ethical and Legal Considerations for Group and Family Therapy and Individual Therapy

Group and family therapy have more challenges in ethical and legal considerations than individual therapy. In group and family therapy ethical consideration is founded in the family premise as a system and thus therapy is more focused on the relationship. Informed consent, confidentiality, and responsibility are some of the ethical and legal considerations that a therapist must observe whether in individual, group or family therapy (Schiefle et al., 2017). Unlike in individual therapy, group and family therapy present a challenge of multiple clients in similar situations and hence an intervention that may be serving one person's interest may be counter therapeutic to another. It is important therefore for a therapist to ensure that interventions are serving all the clients involved (Australian psychological society, 2020)

Unlike in individual therapy, privacy may not be well maintained in group therapy. Although members in the group are clearly instructed that information shared is to remain
confidential and to be shared during therapy the chances of breach of information remain to be high in group therapy. In group and family therapy perception from a client may also be criticized by another member in the group, which might make the client feel that his or her feeling are not respected and do not count. A group and family therapist thus must have a commitment
Considering responsibility as an ethical consideration in group and family therapy, the therapist should ensure that improvement in status of one of the members does not occur at the expense of another. He or she should advocate for a family system throughout the therapy process and avoid being an agent for any member of the group. For confidentiality preservation in group and family therapy, the therapist should arrange sessions with individual group members to encourage sharing by the members with less experience. The confidentiality of the therapy process should be maintained throughout the therapy sessions, with information shared only with consent. Confidentiality should be maintained for all communications related to therapy with information shared only with consent (Schiefele et al., 2017).
References


