Assessment and formulation

1) ABILITY TO CONDUCT ASSESSMENT FOR PSYCHOANALYTIC PSYCHOTHERAPY OF INFANTS, CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS

1. Knowledge

1.1 Ability to draw on knowledge of factors that (based on professional practice and experience) may indicate whether or not a patient is suitable for individual psychoanalytic psychotherapy or other psychoanalytic interventions (e.g. parent-infant psychotherapy), including:

- the patient’s response to non-directive, unstructured approach
- the patient’s response to an exploratory approach (i.e. an interest in being understood and in the therapist’s reflections)
- the patient’s interest in emotionally meaningful communication
- the patient’s developmentally appropriate curiosity about her/himself and about the therapist
- the patient’s developmentally appropriate curiosity about his/her own contribution to difficulties
- the patient’s interest in thinking about, and/or interest in the therapist’s thinking about, interpersonal interaction and relationships
- the patient’s response to an exploratory transference interpretation
- the balance between any indicators of risk to the patient if they connect with painful feelings/memories which could be difficult to manage, as against the benefits of potential emotional growth and development
- the therapist’s experience of the patient in the session
- relevant early history and experiences of the patient
- necessary and adequate external supports for the patient and for the therapy (team co-worker and psychiatric backup where needed, clinical setting, parents/carers, other professionals/agencies, travel arrangements, child protection)
- external factors that could seriously jeopardize, undermine or sabotage continuation or success of therapy (e.g. significant unexpressed or unconscious disagreement or hostility of parents/carers or professionals about treatment)

1.2 Ability to draw on knowledge of the ways in which psychoanalytic psychotherapy technique may need to be adapted in the assessment (and in treatment) to meet the patient’s needs or circumstances, in relation to:

- developmental and/or diagnostic features (e.g. autism, learning difficulties)
COMPETENCE MAP FOR CHILD AND ADOLESCENT
PSYCHOTHERAPISTS AT THE POINT OF QUALIFICATION

- suicide or self-harm risk
- psychiatric illness (e.g. eating disorder, psychosis)
- child protection issues
- trauma, emotional abuse and neglect

1.3 Ability to draw on knowledge of other psychological therapies as a basis for considering more suitable alternatives or choices for the patient

2. Application

2.1 Ability to assess whether there is sufficient support in the external environment for individual work

2.2 Ability to draw upon conscious and unconscious communications that the process of referral and assessment conveys about the supportive environment in deciding upon an approach

2.3 Ability to balance the need to obtain information about the patient and her/his difficulties against the requirement to assess how s/he manages without therapist imposed direction

2.4 Ability to make developmentally appropriate interventions in order to evaluate the patient’s readiness and motivation to engage with a psychoanalytic therapeutic process

- this might include, where appropriate, trial interpretations

2.5 Ability to engage the patient’s interest and curiosity in the therapist’s observations and thoughts about her/him

2.6 Ability to help the patient to be aware of, and where possible reflect on, his/her conscious and unconscious experience of the assessment

2.7 Ability to consider with the patient, in a developmentally appropriate way, her/his capacity to engage and to work within a psychoanalytic frame

2.8 Ability to formulate dominant transference themes that emerge in the assessment in order to gauge how the patient responds to a transference focus

2.9 Ability to reflect upon the emotional impact of the patient on the therapist

2.10 Ability to appraise the potential significance of the emotional impact and the therapist’s response in the understanding of the patient’s difficulties and interpersonal patterns