

VA SST Guidelines for Training Participant Completion

In order to complete the VA SST Training Program, a training participant must comply with the following:

- 1) Complete all Training Activities including:
 - a. Required Readings/Independent Study
 - b. TMS-based Didactics webcourse or equivalent face-to-face presentation by a Regional or National Trainer
 - c. Experiential Learning Session (face-to-face with on-site trainers or face-to-face with virtual trainers)*.
 - d. Consultation Orientation Session
 - e. 6-months Consultation
- 2) Actively participate in the 6-month consultation period, as defined by:
 - a. Starting up and continuing an SST group with Veterans with SMI after attending the workshop.
 - b. Participate in the majority (typical expectation is $\geq 75\%$) of weekly consultation meetings held during the 6-month consultation period.
 - c. Consistently upload audio recordings of SST sessions to their designated VA SST consultant for review.
 - d. If a training participant is responsible for entering CPRS notes, he/she is required to demonstrate that they can complete an SST CPRS template successfully.
 - e. Participate in program evaluation as appropriate, including administering the Goal Setting form during the individual session and the Veteran Outcome Surveys and Goal Tracking form to Veterans before and after SST group participation. (Note: Veteran Outcome Surveys and Goal Tracking forms are only administered when SST group lasts more than 3 months.)

VA Central Office has generated an Evidence Based Psychotherapy Clinician Database, in which all training participants of the various EBP training initiatives are registered. Based upon these developments, the VA SST Training Program wants to clearly define each stage of consultation as they apply to our program. Additionally, we see the need to use consistent language in all program documentation and correspondence with training participants. As such, below are the definitions we have developed:

● Completed consultation and achieved fully satisfactory clinical performance

A training participant will be designated as having “Completed consultation and achieved fully satisfactory clinical performance” when they have:

- 1) Completed all training activities as defined above, and
- 2) Completed all consultation activities (start an SST group, typically $\geq 75\%$ expected attendance in weekly consultation meetings, consistently uploaded recordings to portal for consultant review, participated appropriately in program evaluation). If a training participant is responsible for entering CPRS notes, he/she is also required to demonstrate that they can complete an SST CPRS note template successfully during the consultation period.
- 3) Demonstrated that they can administer SST groups with fidelity to the treatment model. This will be determined by the clinical judgment of the VA SST Consultant plus the training participant must meet 80% of the criterion on the Social Skills Group Observation Checklist on three group recordings and consultants should consider that a clinician conducts individual goal setting sessions adequately. To meet the 80% criterion, 80% of the items on the Social Skills Group Observation Checklist must be rated “Fully” performed and no items rated “Not at all” Performed.

As such, these training participants will receive a VA SST completion certificate. These training participants will be added to the VA Central Office EBP Database with the designation of completed consultation and achieved fully satisfactory clinical performance.” The VA Social Skills Training Program recommends that all non-license eligible VA staff conduct SST groups with co-leaders who are licensed VA staff trained in SST.

● Completed consultation but did not achieve fully satisfactory clinical performance

A training participant will be designated as “Completed consultation but did not achieve fully satisfactory clinical performance” if they:

- 1) Completed all training activities as defined above and
- 2) Completed all consultation activities (start an SST group, typically $\geq 75\%$ expected attendance in weekly consultation meetings, consistently uploaded recordings to portal for consultant review, participated appropriately in program evaluation). If a training participant is

responsible for entering CPRS notes, he/she is also required to demonstrate that they can complete an SST CPRS note template successfully during the consultation period.

- 3) But did not demonstrate that they can administer SST groups with fidelity to the treatment model. This will be determined by the clinical judgment of the VA SST Consultant and/or if the training participant was unsuccessful in meeting 80% of the criterion on the Social Skills Training Group Observation Checklist on three group recordings.

● **Dropped out/Did not finish consultation**

A training participant will be designated as “Dropped out/Did not finish consultation” after having:

- 1) Completed all training activities as defined above but
- 2) Failed to complete all consultation activities (did not start an SST group, less than expected attendance on weekly calls, inconsistently uploaded recordings to portal for consultant review, did not participate appropriately in program evaluation, did not demonstrate that they can complete an SST CPRS note template successfully despite being responsible for CPRS note entry).

As such, these training participants will not receive any certificate but rather will be notified of their “dropped out/did not finish consultation” status by the Program Coordinator. At that time, these training participants will be asked to return all consultation equipment and to complete a quick Exit Interview survey to help us ascertain specific barriers to completing consultation activities.

*Rarely, a training participant may substitute participation in an Experiential Learning Session for participation as a roleplay buddy for 3 SST group sessions where an SST National or Regional Master Trainer is the primary facilitator. This substitution needs to be pre-approved by the VA SST Program Manager or Program Coordinator.