February 2009

Dear Happy to Help,

I've been getting notes returned to me because I keep forgetting to fill in the Service minutes, Documentation minutes and travel time on the Progress Note side - ugh! Is this really necessary?

Signed, Bad with Details

Dear Bad with Details,

These are additional details that are required as a result of the most recent external audit. This is the reason that we revised and implemented the new Progress Notes this past month. For those of you who use the computer, you have noticed some built-in features to help with this detail. However, those of you who continue to handwrite your notes should be sure to include this required information.

Signed, Happy to Help

Dear Happy to Help,

I'm kind of confused by the new computer form of the Progress Note which drops the diagnosis at the top of the note. I'm not quite sure what to do with that. Signed.

Going through Changes

Dear Going through Changes,

We have been having some productive discussions on what to do with that feature! **Yes, it is optional to use this feature.** I want to lay out a sample note to show you how it can be a helpful feature:

[SAMPLE]

Stand alone info.... "Client is a 16 year old, Latino male with ADHD and oppositional defiance resulting in school failure and impaired peer and family relationships."

- (S) Diagnosis treated today: 313.81. Client reported getting into a fight at school resulting in being suspended for several days. Parent reported that client is verbally aggressive toward parents and siblings.
- (I) Met with client and his mother for family therapy. Explored situation leading up to client getting in fight. Explored client's openness to using problem solving strategies to avoid such incidents in the future. Encouraged client to recognize triggers for his anger both at home and at school with parent's participation. Also affirmed parental response of limit-setting and consequences with client and client's effort to accept limits set by parent.
- (R) Client was generally cooperative. He participated in session actively with parent. He appeared to be genuinely regretful of his actions and expressed wanting to avoid future acting out.
- (O)Client is making slow progress on his goal of decreasing incidents of acting out but is making good progress in accepting parental consequences. (cont)

(P) Plan to meet with client next week and to continue to work on problem-solving and anger management skills.

Signature of clinician

I hope you can see from this SAMPLE how the stand alone information is different than the (S)....and how the diagnosis can help you remember to comment on what problems or symptoms need to be addressed that day. It is important to keep in mind that what you write in the (S) needs to support the medical necessity for treatment of your client.

Signed Happy to Help