Crisis Planning for Dual Diagnosis

An overview on how to address crisis situations for individuals with mental illness and an intellectual or developmental disability
What is a Crisis?

- Public systems often define mental health crisis and danger to self or others as the same thing.
- While behaviors that present as a threat to self certainly call for an emergency response, these behaviors are often the culmination of a crisis episode, rather than the episode in its entirety.
IDD/MI Crisis

- People with dual diagnosis are at risk of experiencing a crisis for a number of reasons.
- Crisis management approaches can help a person avoid having to be hospitalized or have an encounter with the criminal justice system.
- A crisis plan is not the same as a behavior support plan.
People with dual diagnosis are often supported by numerous providers covering multiple systems.

Good crisis planning should include **all** supports in an individual’s life.
Developing the Plan

According to SAMHSA (2009), several principles should be taken into consideration when developing a crisis plan:

- Access to supports and services is timely
- Services are provided in the least restrictive manner
- Adequate time is spent with the person in crisis
- Plans are strengths-based
- Emergency interventions consider the context of the individual’s overall plan of services
- Individual’s in a self-defined crisis are not turned away
- Helping the individual to regain a sense of control is a priority
- Services are trauma-informed
- Recurring crises signal problems in assessment or care
- Meaningful measures are taken to reduce the likelihood of future emergencies
Developing the Plan

Proactive Prevention

- Develop a range of ways to prevent crisis from happening again.
- Responses should be from a range of people, not just the person in crisis.
- Examples: changing staffing, change the subject, change aspects of the environment.

Reactive Response

- Good reactive strategies are designed to manage people and events as they happen.
- Should include strategies for managing safety and how people should respond.
- Examples: how to make a space safe, how to best communicate, contacting supports and who is responsible.
Implementing a Plan

- Importance of practice
- Review, modify, and improve after every crisis
- Debriefing and supporting staff after a crisis
- Be proactive in your planning so you are prepared!
Works Cited


