



Innovations in Counseling: Working with Minority Populations- Part 6
Session 5: Staying Clinical, Staying Ethical, and Staying Legal in Immigrant Hardship
Assessment and Evaluation

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with George Ramos

Question from Monique Barber

There's a cap on U and T Visas. Is that met each year? Do you find business is busy early in the year when there are openings, and then dries up once those quotas are met?

Answer from Presenter

When the cap is met, the additional applications roll over to the next year. Where we typically see a rush is when someone has an upcoming court date and they have waited a long time, new evidence is emerging and they need an evaluation to support or they have not had access to funds to complete the assessment.

Question from LaShonna Fletcher

If they are immigrants, are they having financial difficulties to pay for the evaluation?

Answer from Presenter

They very well may! Also some undocumented persons do have employment and other sources of income. In some cases evaluators may provide a sliding scale or pro bono services. Additionally, some agencies may have social workers who can provide "letters of support" which are brief letters to the court in support of the clients cause.

Question from Claudia Reiche

Who pays for the sessions? I would think that many victims (e.g., human trafficking) wouldn't have any money.

Answer from Presenter

You are correct. Typically the client will pay for the session and evaluation. They sometimes can be helped by agencies to pay the fee or evaluators who are willing to work with them on whatever income they may have.

Question from Larry McNeely

Do you have suggestions for appropriate norm referenced instruments that are ethically valid?

Answer from Presenter

I think the Beck inventories, PHQ-9, and CAGE are very popular and well researched and accepted inventories. However, they are self-reporting instruments and they do not "malingering" capacities; this can impact credibility.

Question from Larry McNeely

Further question: Norm referenced for spanish natives?

Answer from Presenter

Many of the aforementioned inventories can be ordered from Pearson on multiple languages.

Question from Marlene Travis

Who pays for the translator? Is this a more viable option in a metropolitan area? I live in a rural area.

Answer from Presenter

The translator fee is paid for by the client. If it is difficult to hire an in-person translator, you can use a HIPPA compliant video conferences software (such as Zoom) to provide the service. In-person is better than virtual, and virtual is better than no translation.

Question from Kristina Wilkerson

Do you know if anyone's experience doing these assessments and using translators? And if so what translation agencies or contacts do you recommend?

Answer from Presenter

I use a translator and I find that the more familiar you are with one person the better the chemistry is and the more comfortable it is for the clients. Many universities have translator certificate programs. A popular credentialing body is the "American Translator Association" Certificate.

Question from Allen Vosburg

I was not aware of this problem at any level, so as a counselor how can I get started in taking the appropriate steps to qualify to be able to help those in need?

Answer from Presenter

You can reach out to attorneys in your area and or other evaluators who are local to start and informal network of support and referrals.

Question from Andrea Westkamp

Is it necessary to know as much as possible about a person's religion and religious obligations?

Answer from Presenter



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It will be very helpful and allow for more context of for the evaluation if one is able to have a deeper understanding of the clients faith. With that said, one does not need to become a religious scholar to have a functional understanding of their faith relative to our purposes.

Question from Citlali Molina

This is outstanding work Mr. Ramos. I am definitely interested in training and offering these services in Texas. Please let us know the dates of your training.

Answer from Presenter

Thank you! Stay tuned to www.NYCImmigrationEvals.com for more info on upcoming trainings.

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